LETTERS
TO
SERENA:

CONTAINING,

I. The Origin and Force of Prejudices.

II. The Hiſtory of the Soul's Immortality among the Heathens.

III. The Origin of Idolatry, and Reaſons of Heatheniſm.

As alſo,

IV. A Letter to a Gentleman in Holland, ſhowing SPINOSA's Syſtem of Philoſophy to be without any Principle or Foundation.

V. *Motion eſſential to Matter*; in Anſwer to ſome Remarks by a Noble Friend on the *Confutation of* SPINOSA.

To all which is Prefix'd,

VI. A Preface; being a Letter to a Gentleman in London, ſent together with the foregoing Diſſertations, and declaring the ſeveral Occaſions of writing them.

By Mr. TOLAND.

Opinionum Commenta delet Dies,
Naturæ Judicia confirmat. *Cic. de Nat. Deor. l.* 2.

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Carl. 94

Advertiſement concerning the Faults of the Preſs.

NOtwithſtanding the Care has been us'd in correcting this Book, yet the Reader muſt with his Pen amend as follows. In the Preface, to avoid Ambiguity, for Mennonite read Mennoniſt. Page 24. line 3. read Ionic before Philoſophers. The Marginal Note in p. 41. markt thus (²) ought to be refer'd to l. 9. of p. 50. P. 75. l. 16. for eighth read ſeventh. In p. 90. l. 13. after the word Minds, add this Period: From the ſame Original, and in the ſame manner, the Poets did vaſtly increaſe the Catalogue of the Gods, apoſtrophing as ſuch not only the Winds, Meteors, Clouds, Rivers, Fountains, Hills, and all Parts of the Univerſe; but likewiſe Facultys, Paſſions, Habits, Accidents, and every thing they cou'd expreſs by one word, or which they cou'd addreſs as a Perſon; and they preſently made it a God or a Goddeſs, as the Word happen'd to be of the Maſculine or Feminine Gender, which was all the Rule they obſerv'd in Deitys of ſo little conſequence. Pag. 103. l. 10. for on read over. P. 127. l. 23. read many before Mediators. P. 174. for mer read mere. P. 184. l. 2. after Relations, read the Reſults of peculiar internal Diſpoſitions, or. P. 199. l. 20. blot out of before Action. P. 225. l. 29. for little read ſtinted. In the Notes, conſequati is put for conſequuti in the laſt Line of p. 80, as ὁ is put for ὅτι in the firſt Line of p. 49. and perhaps there may be found a few others like theſe, not capable to perplex an intelligent and candid Reader. The Greek is printed without Accents, which are a uſeleſs, troubleſom, and no very antient Invention; nor ſhou'd there have bin any Abbreviations or Ligatures, had the Author's Directions bin obſerv'd, there being no more Reaſon or Authority for ſuch things in the Greek than in the Latin, to ſpeak nothing of the Beauty of the Page.

THE PREFACE;

Being a Letter to a Gentleman in London, ſent together with the following Diſſertations, and containing the ſeveral Occaſions of writing them.

1. *IN all your Letters, SIR, you inſinuate that conſidering the Place I am in, and the Company I keep, I muſt needs forget my Books as well as my Acquaintance;*

quaintance; which you kindly endeavour to excuſe, tho not wholly to approve. As for obſerving no regular Correſpondence, I believe you receiv'd Satisfaction in my laſt, nor are you to expect any thing more from me on that Subject: wherefore now, inſtead of the public News or the private Intrigues of this part of the World, I'll ſend you ſome account of my own Studys. 'Tis, I readily confeſs, one of the barreneſt and leaſt entertaining Themes I cou'd take; but you may thank your ſelf for the Trouble, as I hope you'll acquit me from the Choice. And, firſt of all, I muſt frankly ſay, that you are very unjuſt to this Country, and that all your Compariſons between foggy Air and cloudy Underſtandings, between ſlow Motions and dull Conceptions, between immenſe Wilds and Marſhes and indigeſted Imaginations or immethodical Common places, are altogether

altogether groundleſs: nor needs there any other Cenſure of your Partiality, than to put you in mind of thoſe great Names for War and Peace, for Arts and Letters, which this Country has in all times produc'd, with which it is adorn'd at preſent, and with many of whom you might have agreeably convers'd at London, were you leſs conceited of your own Countrymen, or had you a greater regard to Strangers. For there's but too much reaſon for the Complaints, which moſt Foreigners make of the Coldneſs aud Neglect they commonly meet in England, and very often from thoſe to whom abroad they have bin moſt friendly and obliging.

2. *THIS Town, where I remain at preſent, ſeems to be the Metropolis of Politeneſs and Gallantry. As being the Seat of the Government, you may be ſure the moſt refin'd Wits,*

the most shining Beautys, and the most Splendid Equipages make a Figure here; besides a perpetual Concourse of Strangers, Men of the first Distinction in their own Countrys, whose Curiosity excited, and whose Fortunes enabl'd 'em to see other Men and Manners. Tho they abound with true and useful Knowledg, yet I own to you, that there's little to be found of what the mistaken World is apt to honor with the name of Learning; and tho they have variety of excellent Books, yet bookish Porers for Wisdom are the most contemptible sort of Animals among 'em. To judg of things here by Appearance, there's but one continu'd Scene of Love and Gayety among the Young and the Fair, temper'd indeed, but not interrupted by the Men of Politics and Employment. A hasty Passenger, or one that cannot produce himself into all Companys, sees no more; and knows

less

leſs than he did at home, by giving his Friends a wrong Account. But believe me, SIR, I never met in any Part with choicer or more numerous Collections of Books in private Librarys, with freer Inquirers into the Series of Hiſtory and the Secrets of Nature, nor with any (in a word) who better underſtood the Art of making Study a help to Converſation, of reading to good purpoſe by practiſing the World, of diſtinguiſhing Pedantry from Learning, and Ceremony from Civility.

3. *IN ſuch a Place you may imagine it muſt be my own fault, if I neglect thoſe Studys, to which you know me ſo much addicted, and which I may rather improve than abandon by ſuch variety of diverting Intervals. I aſſure you, that while I enjoy Health and Liberty, no Conſideration ſhall be able to debar me from the uſe*

of good Books, wherein I am perſuaded the only perfect Pleaſure is to be found: for tho I love a great many other Pleaſures natural to Man, and that I temperately indulge my ſelf in all that are lawful, yet I muſt agree with common Experience, that in every one of them there's always a mixture of Pain, either in the Expectation, in the Enjoyment, or in the Conſequences; whereas in going over an entertaining Book, the Reader taſts an abſolute Satisfaction without any diſturbing Allay, unmindful of the paſt, not ſollicitous for the future, and wholly taken up with his preſent Happineſs. I have therefore the Power and the Will to purſue my former Studys, as well as many Occaſions to increaſe that Knowledg, which is the Ornament and Perfection of our Nature: but you are to impute the ſmall Advances I make under ſuch favourable Circumſtances, not to

want

want of Inclination, but of Capacity.

4. THO I have leſs Buſineſs than ſome People think, or at leaſt report, yet when I firſt came hither, I did reſolve to confine my ſelf to Reading and Converſe, without ever yielding to the Temptation of writing ſo much as a familiar Letter: but I was quickly oblig'd to take other Meaſures, by the repeated Deſires of a Correſpondent, to whom it's not in my power to deny any thing. The Perſon lives on this ſide the Sea, tho not in this Town; and, what will further mortify your Partiality, it is a fair Lady, who was pleas'd to ask my Opinion concerning the Subjects of the three firſt Diſſertations in the Pacquet annext, and which I ſend to convince you that I was not quite ſo idle as you thought. She's Wife to a Man of conſpicuous Dignity, which is all that imports you to know

at present of her Person.

5. NOW do I see the inmost Thoughts of your Soul, as well as if I had the managing of all its Weights and Springs, or had the very forming of your Brain. You may remember how often I took the part of the other Sex against your Prejudices rather than your Judgment. I was conscious, it's true, of the Goodness of my Cause; but, without Vanity, I cou'd defend a worse against such Arguments, as were only drawn from the habitual Discourse of your Companions, from the ordinary bad Education of Women, or from the famous Ladys of that place where you happen'd to be first bred; and with whom you had a more intimate Acquaintance, than with any of a better Character, either since or before. How often was I forc'd to describe to you what rude, unmannerly, ignorant, and rough-hewn Monsters, those

of

of our Sex *uſe to be, who are not cultivated and poliſht by Converſation or Letters; and that the Wives and Daughters of ſuch Peaſants have generally more Wit and Cunning, a greater ſhare of Breeding and Sagacity? Whether the Excluſion of Women from Learning be the Effect of inveterate Cuſtom, or proceeds from Deſign in the Men, ſhall be no Inquiry of mine: but if a Woman once in her Life happens to pry into Books, and that upon this ſhe grows troubleſom, affected, or ridiculous (as 'tis a thouſand to one ſhe does not) what a clutter do we make about this matter, how ready are we to improve it againſt their natural Genius, and what Triumphs are we decreeing to the Superiority of our own Underſtandings? Whereas, God knows, this is nothing at all to the purpoſe, or at moſt but the ſame thing with the Impertinence, Pride, and Pedantry of thoſe Men,*

who are only Smatterers in Learning, ſuperficial Readers of Books, the ſworn Heralds of Authors and Editions, Collectors of hard or high-ſounding Words and crabbed Phraſes, eager Hunters after Rules and Etymologys, or mere Scholars, and therefore mere Aſſes. I won't repeat what I demonſtrated to you (for I thought it worth the Pains) about the Parity of the intellectual Organs in both Sexes, and that what puts 'em both on the ſame foot in Diſcourſe of ordinary Buſineſs (which is deny'd by no body) makes 'em equally capable of all Improvements, had they but equally the ſame Advantages of Education, Travel, Company, and the Management of Affairs.

6. *I MIGHT diſpenſe with the Trouble of alledging Reaſons, where Experience is ſo expreſs of my ſide; and 'tis not likely that you have for-*

got

got ſome intire Volumes, which I recommended to your Library, containing nothing but the Lives of ſuch Women, among the Antients and the Moderns, as became famous in their own Time, and deſerv'd to have their Names tranſmitted to Poſterity, for their admirable Writings in Philoſophy, Divinity, Morality, and Hiſtory, in Verſe and Proſe, as well as for their approv'd Skill in Painting, in Muſick, and in all the other Arts and Sciences, in the Conduct of formidable Wars, and the Adminiſtration of Civil Affairs, no leſs than in private Oeconomy. DIOGENES LAERTIUS dedicates to a Lady the Hiſtory of the Opinions as well as the Lives of the antient Philoſophers; and therefore we muſt ſuppoſe that ſhe underſtood their ſeveral Syſtems, many of 'em extremely intricate and abſtruſe, eſpecially thoſe in which ſhe moſt delighted, the Philoſophys of PLATO and EPICURUS.

Monſieur

Monſieur MENAGE *has written a whole Book of the Female Philoſophers, inſcrib'd to a Woman now alive, the Celebrated Madam* DACIER, *Daughter to the great Philologiſt* TANAQUIL FABER. *All the Learned World has done Juſtice to her excellent Works, and no body queſtions but ſhe's one of the beſt Critics of our Time in the Greek and Latin Authors, of which the ample Penſion ſettl'd on her by the French King is truly the weakeſt Argument, conſidering ſome others that are in his Pay. I cou'd write a Volume to you my ſelf of ſuch as I know to be in ſeveral Parts of Europe, without recalling from the Dead the Pythagoric Ladys of antient Italy. And among divers others in England (where nevertheleſs they are ſcarce enough) you may find a Lady not perſonally known to me, who is abſolute Miſtriſs of the moſt abſtracted Speculations in the Metaphyſics, and who with*

with an easy Turn of Stile and Argument has defended Mr. LOCK's Essay of Human Understanding,) *against the Letters of an Eminent Divine. Her Book is intitul'd,* A Defence of the Essay of Human Understanding, written by Mr. LOCK, ---- In Answer to some Remarks on that Essay.

7. *FOR Womens wisely governing of States and their valiant Conduct in War, I need not go back to the Babylonian* SEMIRAMIS, *the Scythian* THOMYRIS, *the British* BODICEA, *or the Palmyrean* ZENOBIA. *What think you of* MARGARET *the famous Regent of the Spanish Netherlands? And how often have I known you transported in reading the glorious Annals of our own most learned Linguist, Queen* ELIZABETH, *who chose and directed her incomparable Counsellors, and who wisely*

gave

gave hopes to the Papists of her Favor at the first, that she might afterwards (as she did) with the greater Security establish the Protestant Religion on an unshaken Foundation? Thus she became in a small time the Terror of her Enemys, the Darling of her Subjects, the Support of her Allys, and fill'd all Europe then with Envy and Admiration, as she has since done the whole World with her Name. At this very instant, Queen ANNE, who graces the same Throne, and who proposes ELIZABETH for her Pattern, abundantly shows what a Lady is capable to do. For as she yields to no Prince whatsoever for the Administration of common Justice in her Dominions, in maintaining most powerful Fleets by Sea and numerous Armys by Land, in heading the Grand Alliance of so many different Nations and Persuasions against the Tyranny of France, and providing fit Supplys for the

Wars in Germany, Flanders, Spain, and the Indies: so (what seems to be yet a weightier Task) she keeps such an even Balance among the several contending Partys at home, that they are not able, according to their unnatural Dispositions, to oppress or devour one another; and even such as oppose her just Title in favor of a pretended Brother, find her as merciful in her Lenity to their Persons, as prudent in preventing their pernicious Designs. She has given sufficient Proofs that she will not be influenc'd by the Clamors of Bigots from any Quarter, as well knowing 'em to be the restless Firebrands of Society, and the Disturbers of the publick Tranquillity, under pretence of having greater Zeal than others for Religion, while they only push forward their own particular Piques and Designs, tho under the false color of advancing God's Cause or the Church. Nevertheless she generously endeavours

to

to quiet and ſatisfy the Minds of all ſorts of Men, without neglecting the moſt unreaſonable; which extraordinary Goodneſs (not duly underſtood at the beginning) did animate the malignant Party too haſtily to ſhow their vindictive and arbitrary Spirit, as it drew ſome peaceable Murmurings from the Friends of Liberty, out of Apprehenſions for her Majeſty's Safety and the Preſervation of the Commonwealth. But her Enemys were ſadly diſappointed, and her dutiful Subjects ſeaſonably confirm'd, when it appear'd to all the World (and to us here eſpecially) by her Speech at the opening of this Seſſion of Parliament, that ſhe wou'd not only govern the Church and State according to the known Laws of England, but likewiſe reſolutely maintain the Regal Succeſſion in the Proteſtant Line, with a full and impartial Toleration to all Proteſtant Diſſenters. Here's but a ſhort Character of what's due to the Merits of a Wo-

man, and this under the Diſadvantage of ſucceeding ſo great a Man as King WILLIAM. *Or if there wanted yet an Example,* SIR, *to reconcile you to Female Ability, I wou'd alledg the Preſumptive Heir of our Crown, her Electoral Highneſs the Princeſs* SOPHIA, *who for the many Languages ſhe ſpeaks ſo perfectly, for her vaſt Knowledg in Hiſtory, her deep Inſight in State-Affairs, and nice underſtanding of the principal Controverſys in Religion and Philoſophy, is highly applauded by moſt of the Learned Men in Europe. Now, if after all theſe Reaſons and Inſtances, you are not yet become a ſincere Convert, you ſhall not only be pronounc'd an obſtinate Heretick, but be deliver'd over to the Scorn of the Ladys, as an adequate Puniſhment of your Crime.*

8. *BUT however you continue disposʼd, as to this matter, yet the Length and Number of the Discourses, I send hereby, are a sufficient Answer to what you wrote of my ordinary Occupations in this Place. The Lady at whose Request I wrote the most of ʼem, wants no Qualifications for comprehending their Contents, no more than she wanted Curiosity to propose the Questions. She understands none of the antient Languages, tho she knows very well the Importance of Authority, and will believe no Matters of Fact without it. But as well for your own sake, as to obviate the Scruples of those to whom you may occasionally show these Letters (and you have leave to do so to as many as you please) I have added all the Original Words of the Quotations in the Margin, tho in my Discourse to the Lady they run in the same continuʼd Thred and Stile*

Stile with the reſt. This has bin the laudable Method of the Antients, notwithſtanding the Moderns have ſo ſtrangely perplex'd their Readers with the odd manner of inſerting their Authoritys: nor did ever any Perſon pretend that a Roman Lady of good Senſe cou'd not read CICERO *of* Human Dutys, *or his Dialogues about* Divination, *becauſe he has artfully wrought into his own Text and Words, ſo many Paſſages of the Greek Writers; whereas no Woman on Earth (and very few Men) can make any thing of* SELDEN *or* SALMASIUS, *without being tir'd and diſguſted, which cou'd not fail, even had they written in the vulgar Languages. To ſay that Ladys ought not to be troubl'd with Authority in Reaſoning, is not only to ſay that they are unreaſonable Creatures, but alſo that the Scripture muſt never be quoted to 'em in Religion; becauſe the Men will not let them*

learn Hebrew, or that they are not willing themſelves to ſpoil the Softneſs of their Pronuntiation by ſo harſh a Language.

9. *YOU may depend upon it, SIR, that my Correſpondent is one of the moſt curious Perſons you ever knew, and Miſtriſs of a vaſt Compaſs of Knowledg, having read all that's worth the pains in the Modern Tongues, to ſpeak nothing of the beſt Tranſlations from the antient Originals: and doubtleſs you'll allow a Lady to admire thoſe old Men that are long ſince dead, provided ſhe eſteems the young Men that deſerve it among the Living. Tho ſome may think SERENA an imaginary Lady, yet I aſſure you in particular that ſhe's a very real Perſon, which I the rather repeat, both to create in you a better Opinion of Women, having ſo frequently preſt you to marry; and in hopes that you'll*

give

give ſuch an Education to your Daughters (if ever you have any) as to be a leading Example to others: for the Practice of one Man of Fortune, Birth, and Reputation, has often gone very far towards reforming a whole Country. As for others, 'tis no matter if they ſtill believe SERENA *a Romantic Name, like the Marchioneſs of Monſieur de* FONTENELLES *in his* Plurality of Worlds: *for they'll be ſo juſt however to acknowledg, that if I had the making of a Woman according to my own Fancy, ſhe ſhou'd be quite another thing from thoſe vain, giddy, affected, pratling, and gawdy things, who are as cheap as they are common, and who, as they are nothing but Outſide themſelves, value nothing but Outſide in others; being Strangers to all good Qualitys, void of ſolid Vertue and true Merit; fit only for an hour's Diverſion or Amuzement, but not for the principal De-*

light and indiſſoluble Society of Life. This is no more a Reflection on the Women, than on the generality of the Men, whoſe Foppery, Singularity, Pride, Ignorance, and Intemperance, muſt ſet 'em at leaſt on an equal bottom with the other Sex. Nor ought this Conſideration to heighten your Averſion, but your Caution, ſince being none of thoſe Men, you may reaſonably expect your match among the Women.

10. *BUT leaving the Ladys for this time, I muſt prepare you a little, SIR, for reading the Letters annext, by telling you the ſeveral Occaſions of writing them. The Subject of the firſt Letter is* The Origin and Force of Prejudices, *not from their phyſical, but their moral Cauſes. The Occaſion was my ſhowing to SERENA the following Paſſage of* CICERO.

Neither

* Neither Parents (*ſays he.*) or Nurſe, or Schoolmaſter, or Poet, or Playhouſe depraves our Senſes, nor can the Conſent of the Multitude miſlead them: but all ſorts of Traps are laid to ſeduce our Underſtandings, either by thoſe whom I juſt now mention'd, who when they receive us tender and ignorant, infect and bend us as they pleaſe; or elſe by that Pleaſure which lies ſo deeply rooted in every one of our Senſes, the pretended Follower of Good, but the real Mother of all Evils, corrupted by whoſe Allurements, we do not ſufficiently diſtinguiſh thoſe

* Senſus noſtros non Parens, non Nutrix, non Magiſter, non Poeta, non Scena depravat, non multitudinis Conſenſus abducit: at vero Animis omnes tenduntur Inſidiæ, vel ab iis quos modo enumeravi, qui teneros & rudes cum acceperunt, inficiunt & flectunt ut volunt; vel ab ea, quæ penitus in omni ſenſu implicata inſidet, imitatrix Boni voluptas, Malorum autem mater omnium, cujus

things that are good by Nature, becauſe they want this Softneſs and Titillation. *Admiring the maſterly Strength, and yet natural Eaſineſs of theſe Words, ſhe own'd to me, that after diſcovering many Prejudices to be really ſuch, yet ſhe did not find her ſelf perfectly cur'd of their Influence and frequent Returns. Wherefore ſhe demanded my Opinion of this matter in writing, which I perform'd in as brief a manner as I cou'd, taking that very Paſſage for my Text; ſhowing the ſucceſſive Growth and Increaſe of Prejudices thro every ſtep of our Lives, and proving that all the Men in the World are join'd in the ſame Conſpiracy to deprave the Reaſon of every individual Perſon. I have drawn as lively a Picture as I cou'd in little, of the Pre-*

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cujus Blanditiis corrupti quæ natura bona ſunt, quia dulcedine hac & ſcabie carent, non cernimus ſatis. *De Leg. lib.* 1.

judices

judices in all Conditions of Men, nor have I tax'd any thing but what is blam'd by every one in others, however they may indulge their own Miſtakes: and he that will infer, that I am againſt either Learning, or Religion, or Government, from what I have cenſur'd in Schools, Univerſitys, Churches, or Stateſmen, may with as good reaſon pretend that I am againſt breeding up or nurſing of Children, againſt all Profeſſions and Trades, againſt ordinary Converſation, or living in Society; ſince there's none of theſe without their peculiar Abuſes, and that they are only ſuch Abuſes which I diſprove.

II. *THE ſecond Letter contains* The Hiſtory of the Soul's Immortality among the Heathens, *and was written at* SERENA's *Requeſt. After asking me one day, whether Juſtice was done to* PLATO *in*

a *French Tranſlation of his* PHÆDO, *which I recommended to her, and my anſwering that his Senſe was pretty well repreſented, tho his Elegance far from being expreſt; ſhe wonder'd that the reading of that Book cou'd add any Force to* CATO's *Reſolution of laying violent hands on himſelf, to avoid falling under the Uſurpation of* CÆSAR; *and much more that it cou'd ſo tranſport* CLEOMBROTUS *of Ambracia as to precipitate himſelf into the Sea, the ſooner to arrive at that happy State therein deſcrib'd: acknowledging that ſhe found little cogent Evidence, and a world of precarious Suppoſitions, throughout that whole tedious Dialogue. I told her that Divine Authority was the ſureſt Anchor of our Hope, and the beſt if not the only Demonſtration of the Soul's Immortality. I added, that it was not ſtrange to find this Opinion doubted or deny'd by many of the Heathens, and made a*

matter of ſuch Indifference by moſt of 'em, conſidering how it firſt came to be known among them, and the feeble Reaſons they had to believe it: concluding, that CATO *wou'd not have ſurviv'd the Liberty of Rome, had he never ſeen the Works of* PLATO; *that the Story of* CLEOMBROTUS *was far from being well atteſted; that ſome of the Antients themſelves laid little ſtreſs on the Arguments there put in the mouth of* SOCRATES; *and that* CICERO, *the profeſt Admirer of* PLATO, *and particularly of this Book, cou'd yet give his Cenſure of it in theſe words:* * But I know not how it happens (*ſays he*) that while I read I aſſent; but when I have laid aſide the Book, and begin to reaſon with my ſelf about the

* Sed neſcio quo modo, dum lego aſſentior: cum poſui Librum, & mecum ipſe de Immortalitate Animarum

the Soul's Immortality, all that Aſſent is vaniſh'd. *She was ſurpriz'd to hear me talk of a Time when this Opinion begun among the Heathens, as if like other Notions it had its proper Authors, Favorers, or Oppoſers, all which I roundly affirm'd to her, and that withal I wou'd ſhow her the gradual Progreſs of it thro all the Parts of the Earth then known, together with the true Original of the Poetical Fables concerning the Elyſian Fields, the Rivers, Judges, Gates, and Ferryman of Hell, of Souls being diſquieted for want of orderly Burial, and manifeſt Proofs that the antient Egyptians were the genuine Fountains of all Learning and Religion to the Heathen World. All this I have endeavour'd to make out, I will not ſay by the beſt Authoritys that ever were, but by the beſt in the*

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marum cœpi cogitare, Aſſenſio omnis illa elabitur. *Tuſc. Quæſt. lib. 1.*

moſt

most antient Books we have remaining; for in these cases Suppositions ought to go for nothing, and therefore when we say that such or such were the first that taught Astronomy, that built Temples, that practis'd Magick, we do not mean absolutely the first (for in so many Ages who cou'd be certain of that?) but the first that can be prov'd on Record so to have done; and thus I wou'd be understood whenever I express my self in that manner. I have in this Letter likewise prov'd, that the Opinion of the Soul's Immortality had not its beginning from the Philosophers, as making such an Inference from the Spontaneous Motions, Reasoning, or Speech of Men; but, on the contrary, I have shown this Notion among the Heathens to have bin first taken up by the Mob, popular Traditions often becoming the Doctrins of Philosophers, who strive to support by good Reasons what the others begun with none

or very bad ones. If what I have alledg'd be found to be true, it first confutes those who commonly suppose that the Heathens had learnt the Soul's Immortality from the Jews, and secondly the Opinion which Dr. COWARD *has espous'd,* * *That* the separate Existence of Human Souls proceeded from the Heathen Philosophers and no others; *tho when I wrote that Letter I did not know there was any such Book in the world as the Doctor's, which I have but lately seen, and found nothing in it to my purpose.*

12. *IN the third Letter written likewise to* SERENA, *and at her own Desire, you'll find* The Origin of Idolatry, *explain'd after a very different manner from what is commonly receiv'd. There also you may read the first Causes of the Heathen Temples,*

* Grand Essay, *p.* 105.

Priests,

Prieſts, and Altars, their Feaſts, and Sacrifices; of Images, Statues, and Tutelary Powers; of Ghoſts, Spectters, Oracles, Magick, and Judiciary Aſtrology; with the Reaſons how People came to imagine that Heaven (or the Palace of the Good) was over their Heads, and that Hell (or the Priſon of the Wicked) was under their Feet; why they look up when they pray, and ſeveral other things of this nature, for which it's generally imagin'd no account can be given beſides Cuſtom, or that in the Abyſs of Time, and under the Ruins of proper Monuments, ſuch Originals are irrecoverably bury'd. Reaſons are likewiſe given in this Letter for the principal of the Heathen Rites, the odd Deſcriptions they have made of their Deitys, the ungodlike Hiſtorys they relate of their Actions, and other Particularitys which have bin long regarded as the Fictions of Poets, or the Extravagancys of human Imagination,

but

but no way to be probably reduc'd to the Exactneſs of Hiſtory. And laſt of all is explain'd the threefold Diviſion of the Heathen Theology into Natural, Civil, and Poetical, with the Allegorical Interpretation of their Myſterys, and a Parallel of their Practices with the Corruptions of Chriſtianity; whereby it appears that in all Ages Superſtition is actually the ſame, however the Names of it may vary. This third is the longeſt of all the Letters, but you'll think it impoſſible that in ſo ſhort a one any Satisfaction can be given concerning ſo many different Subjects as I have already nam'd, not to inſiſt on what I have not time to mention: and therefore you are to ſuppoſe that I don't empty common places here, and deliver all that may be ſaid on each of theſe Heads (which I have bin far from doing) but only all that's ſtrictly neceſſary to make 'em very certain, eaſy, and intelligible to a Lady, and conſequently to all Capacitys. This

is not an Argument therefore that I have no more Reaſons or Authoritys left to defend what may be reckon'd dangerous Paradoxes, by ſuch as are mortally afraid if they are led but one ſtep out of the common Road, tho but to make their way ſhorter and ſafer, or to walk upon Carpet Downs, inſtead of wandring guideleſs thro a Wilderneſs, over Lakes and Moraſſes, among dreadful Rocks and Precipices.

13. *YOU'll wonder, I believe, that I ſhou'd differ ſo much both about the Origin and Progreſs of Idolatry, with one whoſe Book on this very Subject I have ſo lately recommended to you under an advantageous Character; I mean the moſt faithful and laborious Antiquary* ANTONY VANDALE, *principal Phyſician to the City of Harlem. My Opinion of that Book is ſtill the ſame, only that (as I then told you) inſtead of the* Origin and Progreſs of Idolatry, *I think it ought to have been intitul'd,*

A compleat Collection of the moſt antient Heathen, Jewiſh, and Chriſtian Superſtitions: *for theſe things are in that Book very accurately deſcrib'd, but little ſaid of their Origin, or nothing contrary to my Authority, except what I have confuted about the Worſhip of the Celeſtial Bodys; and the Progreſs of Idolatry from Chaldea to Syria and other Parts of Aſia, particularly to Ionia, thence to Greece, and ſo on, barely ſuppos'd, but not offer'd to be prov'd, as may be ſeen in the ſecond and third Chapters of the firſt Diſſertation, where the Subject is indeed but incidentally hinted. Nor do I queſtion but that learned Gentleman will prefer good Authority, tho not commonly taken notice of, to a vulgar Error, tho generally approv'd. Mr.* VANDALE's *Hiſtory of the Heathen Oracles you have already perus'd with great Satisfaction. He has lately publiſh'd eleven Diſſertations relating chiefly to the Sacred Functions of the Heathens, wherein from Medals,*

Medals, Inſcriptions, and Paſſages of Authors, vaſt Diſcoverys are made in Antiquity. He has at preſent in the Preſs a Confutation of the pretended ARISTEAS, *and conſequently the Hiſtory of the Greek Tranſlation of the Old Teſtament, falſly attributed to the ſeventy Interpreters. In the ſame Volume he treats of the antient Rites of Purification and Regeneration, as Waſhings, Sprinklings, Immerſions, by Water, by Blood, and the like; whence we are to expect many curious Circumſtances relating to Chriſtian Baptiſm, deliver'd not only with the greateſt Freedom, but alſo with the utmoſt Fairneſs: for tho Mr.* VANDALE *be by Profeſſion a Mennonite, or (as we term them) an Anabaptiſt, yet he's one of the moſt paſſionate Lovers of Truth, as well as of his Friends, that I ever knew; of a large Soul notwithſtanding his narrow Fortune, and of nobler Thoughts than to be a Bigot to any thing againſt*

plain Reaſon or Authority.

14. *I HAVE written other Letters to* SERENA, *and concerning matters much more curious; but not having yet tranſcrib'd 'em fair, I ſend you inſtead of them two Philoſophical Letters, written to Gentlemen altogether unknown to you. The firſt, being the fourth in the Pacquet, was ſent to an exceſſive Admirer of* SPINOSA, *one wholly addicted to his Principles, and reputed the beſt of any to underſtand his Syſtem. After having diſputed together at ſeveral times on ſeveral Heads, I told him once, en paſſant, that the whole Fabrick of that Philoſophy was without any ſolid Foundation; of which he laying immediate hold, wou'd never let me be quiet, till, getting leiſure enough in a lovely Country Retirement, I wrote this Letter. Being a Perſon of extraordinary Candor, he freely acknowledg'd* SPINO-

SA *to be defective in that point, and conſequently in all that depended on it; tho he had never obſerv'd ſo much before, and ſome other Spinoſiſts ſhow'd the ſame Ingenuity. But a Gentleman, no leſs illuſtrious for his excellent Learning than his noble Family, having got a ſight of what they ſtil'd* the Confutation of SPINÖSA, *and which they handed one to another, he beſtow'd many Commendations (not fit for me to repeat) on that part of the Letter which directly regarded that Philoſopher: but expreſt his Diſlike of the latter part, wherein I declar'd my own Opinion, that* Motion is eſſential to Matter no leſs than Extenſion, *and that Matter neither ever was nor ever can be a ſluggiſh, dead, and inactive Lump, or in a State of abſolute Repoſe. To the ſeveral Objections he was pleas'd to make, I return'd diſtinct Anſwers in the ſecond Letter, which is the fifth and laſt in*

the Pacquet. For the Apologys I make about maintaining a Notion ſo flatly oppoſite both to the Antients and Moderns, I refer you to the Letter it ſelf, where you'll likewiſe be convinc'd that my Opinion is not chargeable with any of thoſe ill Conſequences, to which at firſt ſight it may ſeem obnoxious. I ſhall not anticipate your own Obſervation with relation to what important Uſes it may ſerve in Philoſophy, ſince the Queſtion ought not to be how convenient, but how true it is: nor will I excuſe my writing of the Myſterys of Philoſophy in ſo plain a Stile, being ſorry I had not time enough to render thoſe things much more common and intelligible, it being a great deal eaſier to deliver 'em in the ordinary Terms of Art; but then fewer are left Judges of the Controverſy, and the Subject made leſs uſeful or entertaining. I hope, if Dr. COWARD (whoſe laſt Book I have lately perus'd) happens

happens to ſee this Letter, that he will not aſſert it * to be evidently plain that Motion is not Matter, tho if we come to define it, *ſays he*, we can hardly find Words to expreſs its Quiddity by: *for I fancy I have made it very clear, that Motion is but Matter under a certain Conſideration, tho it does not imply or exhauſt the whole Idea of Matter, no more than Extenſion does. One that ſaw (as he profeſſes to do* †) the Poſſibility of God's endowing Matter with ſelf-movent Principles, *will no longer hold it to be* philoſophically impoſſible: *nor maintain that* ‖ it does not always exert it ſelf from ſome latent and unknown Reaſons of the Divine Wiſdom; *and theſe Reaſons he gueſ-*

* Grand Eſſay, p. 74.
† Ibid. *Preface.*
‖ Ibid. p. 153.

ſes may be * to preſerve the Order and Frame of the Univerſe, which (*he thinks*) ſhou'd all Matter ſtart up into Self-motion, wou'd neceſſarily be deſtroy'd, and therefore God has thought fit to reſtrain it. *When he conſiders my Arguments, he'll find no ſuch danger to the Univerſe, as he apprehends, from Matter's conſtant Exerciſe of its eſſential Action: and indeed it wou'd be a Contradiction that Motion was eſſential to Matter, and yet that only ſome Parts of Matter, and on certain occaſions, were endow'd with a power of moving themſelves; whereas Matter may as well be ſometimes without Extenſion as without Motion, if there be any weight in my Allegations; tho neither this, nor that, nor any other particular Direction of its Motion be eſſential to*

* Id. ib.

it, but left to the ordinary Determinations of the mutual Action of Bodys on one another, or to the immediate Power and moſt wiſe Purpoſe of Almighty God. But to ſay that God may take Motion from Matter, tho it were eſſential to it, is to ſay, that he can deprive it of Extenſion or Solidity; and this is to ſay, that he can make it no Matter.

15. *ACCORDING to the liberty I gave you before, you may indifferently ſhow theſe Letters to all your Acquaintance that are curious of ſuch things, without inquiring whether they be Friends or Foes to me, whether they be Whigs or Torys, Latitudinarians or Preciſians, Occaſional Conformiſts or Nonjurant Schiſmatics: for there's nothing in this Pacquet relating to the Diſputes which divide 'em at preſent either in Religion or Politics, nothing but what may be read without*

Paſſion

Paſſion by thoſe of all Partys, Sects, and Factions. Theſe are only innocent Reſearches into the venerable Ruins of Antiquity, or ſhort Eſſays in Philoſophy, not calculated to offend any, but to pleaſe all; and to divert, if they are not capable to inſtruct. As for thoſe who are jealous of every thing, they are ſufficiently puniſh'd in having their Cenſures valu'd by no body; and (as we uſe to quiet froward Children) to neglect their Complaints, and not to humour their Pettiſhneſs, is the moſt certain way of ſilencing thoſe peeviſh Knights Errant, who are always in ſearch of new Adventures, and make every one they encounter a Giant or a Dwarf. It were an effectual Method indeed to diſcourage all Improvements in Learning, all further Progreſs in Knowledg or Politeneſs, if Men cou'd be deter'd from preſenting the World with the Opinions, Manners, Religions, or Governments of the Antients, leſt

any

any of the Moderns ſhou'd fancy their own Perſonages to be acted under this Diſguize: nor will I deny but Applications of this kind may ſometimes be very naturally made, tho a Writer had never thought or intended ſuch a thing, which I declare to be my preſent Diſpoſition, except where I have directly expreſt the Compariſon; but ſuch Inferences are much eaſier drawn by the People concern'd, who muſt needs perceive the beſt of any, what has the greateſt Reſemblance with their own Doctrins or Practices. Now in this Caſe there remains, in my judgment, but one of theſe two things; either to reject what they themſelves defend, if it be no better grounded than what they condemn in the Antients, and that perhaps it has from thence its very Original: or elſe to get a Law enacted, that People muſt not be told what the Antients believ'd, and that the Moderns never copy'd any thing from them but what was abſolutely uſe-

ful

ful and good, omitting all that was any way bad or erroneous.

16. *AS for the Reflections you may not be willing to hear againſt me from any of your angry Friends, I have often advis'd you not to trouble your ſelf about ſuch Trifles no more than I do; at leaſt till you ſee that my Betters in Church and State can be able to ſecure themſelves from the Slander and Calumny of thoſe, who have an Intereſt to decry their Perſons, or want Ability to oppoſe their Performances. Mankind is in all Ages the ſame; the ſame Artifices have bin ever us'd to raiſe their Paſſions or to miſguide their Zeal, and no Apologys can ſatisfy ſuch as are angry without a reaſon, or out of perſonal Hatred: wherefore all wiſe Men have ever deſpis'd the Outcrys of this ſort, and if they perform'd any thing worthy of Notice or Praiſe, they wou'd wonder more to hear they were*

not

not blam'd (which ſeldom happen'd) than that they were maliciouſly attack'd as they expected, ſuſpecting by the Silence of others that their Work was contemptible, or fearing from the general Approbation that they had not written the Truth. But whatever might be their Fortune in their own Time, impartial Poſterity does juſtice to their Memory, when that of their Adverſarys is utterly forgot, or remember'd only to their Diſgrace, for their envious or ignorant Oppoſition of what deſerv'd their Thanks and Approbation. Of all Weakneſſes Vanity is certainly the moſt unbecoming; and yet when an Adverſary rails, a man is very apt to think he cannot reaſon; that when he's angry, 'tis becauſe he cannot anſwer; that he has little to ſay to the Subject, when he rambles to things which are foreign to it; and that when he raiſes a Duſt, 'tis to blind his Reader's Eyes, or to eſcape under the favor of his own Cloud. There are ſome, we know,

know, of that peculiar Temper, that they cannot live, if they are not beſpattering one or other; and if it be neceſſary for their Health, or that their Conſtitution requires this Diſcharge of their Choler, we ought no more to blame them, than we find others regard what they ſay. As for the Character of a Low Churchman, *which you ſent me, and ſuch other Authors, who notwithſtanding my Abſence, or not intermeddling in their Controverſys, and conſidering the Satisfaction I gave in* Vindicius Liberius *concerning the Exceptions taken at* Chriſtianity not Myſterious, *yet have wire-drawn my Name into their irreligious Invectives, and wou'd needs honor me with their Abuſes in ſo good Company, as that of our moſt venerable Prelates; who, in ſhort, have us'd the ſame Language ſince my Silence and Compliance as before; 'tis plainly evident, that all their Pretences were*

were as hypocritical as their Charity is narrow, that they were never acted by Zeal for my Soul, but Malice againſt my Perſon, not out of Concern for the Church, but to gratify a Faction, and ſome of 'em to be rewarded for petty Services, who can never expect Preferment by greater. Theſe are the men who occaſion'd that Scandal on the Clergy, that they never forgive; but God forbid that a great Body ſhould be chargeable with the Offences of a few, who ſcribble without their Conſent. He ſhall at any time have my Thanks, and not my Diſpleaſure, who treats me with no more Reſpect than our never to be forgotten Deliverer from Slavery and the inimitable Stator of our Liberty, King WILLIAM; *who gives me no better Quarter than to ſo conſiderable a Body of Proteſtants and good Subjects as the Engliſh Diſſenters; and who ſhows no more Tenderneſs to me, than to all the moderate Members of the eſtabliſh'd*

Church.

Church. But that Perſon has pleas'd ſo very few by his furious and intemperate way of writing, not to ſpeak of his want of Knowledg as well as want of Civility, and indeed the very Deſign of his Libel was ſo extremely wicked, to oppreſs ſome, and to divide us all, that without regard to him or thoſe of his Kidney, I may venture to declare my ſelf a Low Churchman at home, and an Occaſional Conformiſt with the Proteſtants here abroad.

17. *HAVING ſo well prepar'd you before for reading the following Diſſertations without any Rub or Obſtacle in your way, I ſhall releaſe you and my ſelf from any further Trouble at preſent, only aſſuring you that I long to ſee you (which I hope to do very ſhortly) as much as any Man in England, and that I am as much your humble Servant.*

LETTER

LETTER I.

The Origin and Force of Prejudices.

1. YOU greatly complain, MADAM, that you are ſtill a Captive to ſeveral Prejudices; and I wonder more how you came to get rid of ſo many. You'l be eaſily comforted, and entertain a better Opinion of your ſelf, when you ſeriouſly conſider in what a miſerable Condition all men are born, and how impoſſible it is for them not to be educated in Error; how difficult to get free from their Prepoſſeſſions in riper Age, and how dangerous to do it, when they become well-diſpos'd by the Diſcovery of Truth.

Letter I.

2. NOW, ſince you are pleas'd to deſire it, I ſhall briefly trace this Subject from the beginning, ſhowing by what degrees our Prejudices grow, and what additional ſtrength they inceſſantly receive in their courſe. We all partake but too much of the Inclinations of thoſe that give us Life, and of the Paſſions that are predominant in the Blood of the Family: and if our Features and Actions were not infallible Arguments, that we are ſubject to receive good or bad Impreſſions in the Womb; yet the extraordinary Marks which we ſometimes bear, occaſion'd by the Longing of our Mothers, or by ſome other Accident (which they often remember) afford a ſufficient Proof that the Foundation of our Prejudices is very ſtrongly laid before we are born. The Temperament we receive in the firſt Formation, gives not only a Diſpoſition to this or that particular Humor and Habit; but alſo a viſible Biaſs to moſt Actions of our future Lives, which is not to be cur'd but by the utmoſt Efforts and Exerciſe of Reaſon.

3. WE no ſooner ſee the Light, but the grand Cheat begins to delude us from

from every Quarter. The very Mid- Letter
wife hands us into the World with ſuper- I.
ſtitious Ceremonys, and the good Women aſſiſting at the Labor have a thouſand Spells to avert the Misfortune, or to procure the Happineſs of the Infant; making ſeveral ridiculous Obſervations, to diſcover the Omen of his future State of Life. Nor is the Prieſt in ſome places behind-hand with theſe Goſſips, to initiate him betimes into his Service, by pronouncing certain Forms of Words as ſo many powerful Charms, and uſing the gentle Symbols of Salt or Oil, or the ſeverer Applications of Iron or Fire, or by marking him after ſome other manner, as his own Right and Property for the future. The Child, it's true, is not yet affected by any of theſe or the like Fooleryś, whatever Virtue he may be afterwards perſuaded to allow them: but this ſhows how early thoſe about him begin to infect him (if they cou'd) with their own miſtakes, and how induſtriouſly every one with whom he has afterwards to do, endeavours to deprave his Reaſon from the very beginning; ſo that not remembring when, or where, or how he came by many of his Notions, he's tempted to believe that they proceed from Nature it ſelf, and is aſto-

Letter I.

niſh'd to find that any ſhou'd call the Truth of 'em in queſtion; as it will more evidently appear from the following Reflections.

4. WE are preſently after our Birth deliver'd to Nurſes, ignorant Women of the meaneſt Vulgar, who infuſe into us their Errors with their Milk, frightning us into quiet with the menaces of Rawhead and Bloody-bones, Bugglebows and Bullbeggars. And leſt we ſhou'd be loſt by wandring abroad, or drop into Wells or Rivers, they terrify us with ſtorys of Spirits and Hobgoblins, making us believe that all loneſome places are haunted, and that the inviſible Powers are principally active and miſchievous in the night-time. What is thus invented at the beginning to keep Children under Government (a Government that indeed makes 'em miſerable Slaves ever after) is believ'd by them in good earneſt when they grow older, whereby the whole Generation and Country comes to be perſuaded of it at laſt, and this to ſuch a degree, that many People (otherwiſe prudent enough) dare not ſleep alone in a Chamber, nor travel but by Day-light, much leſs have they the courage to enter into

into empty Houſes or Churches. Letter I.

5. FROM our Nurſes we are brought home, where we are ſtill put into worſe hands among idle and ignorant Servants, whoſe chiefeſt Entertainments are Diſcourſes of Fairys, Elves, Witchcrafts, walking Ghoſts, Fortune-telling, conſulting Aſtrologers, or ſuch other chimerical Doings; delighting to fright and delude one another, not ſeldom to carry on their private Intrigues: which things, however intended, never fail to make fatal impreſſions on the Children: and for the moſt part our Parents are not wiſer.

6. THEN we are ſent out to School, where all the Youth come equally infected from home, and hear of nothing there but Dæmons, Nymphs, Genii, Satyrs, Fauns, Apparitions, Prophecys, Tranſformations, and other ſtupendous Miracles. We tell all our ſtorys over again among our ſelves; and what may be conceal'd from a Child in a prudent Family, he's ſure to hear of it at School, where ſo many Children are brought together, not to improve one another (which cannot be ſuppos'd of ſuch Converſation) but to communicate their

Letter I.

mutual Miſtakes and vicious Habits, to grow the more idle, and to meet with bad Examples. We greedily devour the Poets, Orators, and Mythologiſts, committing great Extracts of their Fictions to our memory, being ſurpriz'd and gain'd by the Charms of their Stile, Numbers, and Compoſition; whereby it comes to paſs that we ſwallow the Poiſon of their Errors with inexpreſſible Pleaſure, and lay a large Foundation for future Credulity, inſenſibly acquiring a Diſpoſition for hearing things rare and wonderful, to imagin we believe what we only dread or deſire, to think when we are but puzzl'd that we are convinc'd, and to ſwallow what we cannot comprehend.

7. WE are made little wiſer, tho much more vain and conceited in the Univerſitys, eſpecially abroad, where the Profeſſors (right or wrong) muſt accommodate all things to the Laws and the Religion of the Country: or, if they ſteal ſometimes into the Liberty of Philoſophizing, they generally run into Extremes, either making us truſt too little or too much to our Senſes, or amuſing us with illuſory Abſtractions, and Subtiltys which refine the Subject

 out

out of our View, reducing it at laſt to mere nothing. The Univerſity is the moſt fertile Nurſery of Prejudices, whereof the greateſt is, that we think there to learn every thing, when in reality we are taught nothing; only we talk by Rote with mighty aſſurance the precarious Notions of our Syſtems, which if deny'd by another, we have not a word further to ſay out of our common Road, nor any Arguments left, to ſatisfy the Oppoſer or our ſelves. But our comfort is, that we know as much as our Maſters, who affect to ſpeak a barbarous Jargon which commonly has no Signification; and the main Art that fits their Diſciples to take their Degrees, is to treat of very ordinary Matters in very extraordinary Terms. Yet this dos not render them half ſo inſupportable to People of Senſe, as their formal Stiffneſs and Pedantry, their perpetual Itch of Diſpute and Contradiction. I purpoſely forbear ſaying any thing of the Advantage commonly taken there from the Inexperience of the Youth (who muſt naturally rely on the Judgment of their Teachers) to ingage 'em betimes to different Partys and Factions, to Sourneſs, Cenſoriouſneſs, and Bigotry: for, in one word, there Letter I.

Letter I. is ſcarce any thing learnt at the Univerſity, but what a man muſt forget, if he would be underſtood, or not appear ridiculous and troubleſome, when he comes into other Company.

8. BUT as if all this were not enough to corrupt our Underſtandings, there are certain Perſons hir'd and ſet apart in moſt Communitys of the World, not to undeceive, but to retain the reſt of the People in their Miſtakes. This will be counted a hard Saying, but it cannot concern the Orthodox Clergy: and of other Prieſts what can there be more certain, ſince 'tis for this very reaſon they are counted Heterodox? The ſtrange things and amazing ſtorys we have read or heard (if of any Concern to a particular Religion) are daily confirm'd to us by the Preacher from the Pulpit, where all he ſays is taken for Truth by the greateſt part of the Auditory, no body having the liberty to contradict him, and he giving out his own Conceits for the very Oracles of God. Tho every Sect will deny this of its peculiar Doctrines (and that we know it, SERENA, to be falſe of the Reform'd Religion which we profeſs) yet the reſt affirm it with unde-

niable Arguments of one another; for it is impoſſible they ſhou'd be all or above one of 'em in the right, which is a Demonſtration that the reſt, being the bulk of Mankind, are retain'd in their Miſtakes by their Prieſts. And nevertheleſs the very Doubts about the Joys of Heaven and the Torments of Hell, are enough to procure Authority for their infinite Contradictions: ſo ſtrong are the Impreſſions of Hope and Fear, which yet are ever founded in Ignorance! Letter I.

9. WHEN we come abroad into the World, we find all thoſe Errors to be in ſo high a Credit, that every one is gaz'd on as a Monſter, who is out of this univerſal Mode: or if by ſome lucky chance we ſhou'd happen to be undeceiv'd, yet the prevailing Power of Intereſt will make us hypocritically (or, if you pleaſe, prudently) to pretend the contrary, for fear of loſing our Fortunes, Quiet, Reputation, or Lives. This confirms others in their Prejudices by our example, as much as if we were deceiv'd our ſelves; for knowing nothing of our Minds but by our outward Actions, which appear ſo like their own, they judg us to be of the

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the ſame Perſuaſion. Beſides, that to maintain we are in the Right, while others are in the Wrong, will be interpreted ſuch an Affront to all other People, as a Man wou'd not venture to be guilty of who knows Mankind, and is reſolv'd to lead an eaſy Life far from the Noiſe, and Crowd, and Hurry of the World.

10. THOSE who are more in love with the Buſtle of the Publick, or more under a Neceſſity to endure it, generally betake themſelves to ſome Profeſſion. This indiſpenſably engages 'em to many Prejudices in favor of their particular Calling, which if all of 'em do not always believe, yet they find it their intereſt that others ſhou'd do ſo, to gain with them the greater Credit, Reputation, and Authority. CATO the Cenſor wonder'd, that when one Augur met another, they did not laugh at the Simplicity of thoſe who believ'd their Divinations; and if they had done ſo among themſelves (as we know from Hiſtory they often did) yet they wou'd never the ſooner expoſe the Craft of their Order to the People, who thought 'em the infallible News-mongers of Heaven, and who paid 'em ſo well for their

their Intelligence. Hence not only every Profeſſion, but alſo every Rank of Men, have their particular Language, which is thought by others to contain very extraordinary Matters, much above the common Capacity or Comprehenſion. The Nobility, Country-Gentlemen, Jockys, and Beaus, have as well their ſeveral Cants (tho not ſo barbarous) as the Divines, the Lawyers, Phyſicians, and Philoſophers. Except the few wiſe and cunning, all the reſt are really perſuaded that they are far greater Men than ſuch as are ignorant of their Terms; and I have many times ſeen a Hunter as much deſpiſe the good Senſe of thoſe who did not underſtand his noiſy Jargon, as an Aſtrologer very proud of illuminating the credulous Mob with that vile Stuff, which he did not ſo much as underſtand himſelf. In moſt Profeſſions (eſpecially in thoſe they repute Mechanick) the Members are ſworn not to diſcover the Myſtery of their Trade, which very Notion of Myſtery makes others imagin that there's ſomething extraordinary in very trivial matters thus artfully diſguiz'd; and your Myſterys of State (tho not to be pry'd into by vulgar Eyes, but to be admir'd with Veneration) are ſometimes

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times as airy and imaginary, as ſlight and ridiculous as any others.

11. BUT no ſort of Prejudices ſtick cloſer to us, or are harder to be eradicated, than thoſe of the Society wherein we live and had our Education. This holds equally true of their civil Cuſtoms and religious Rites, of their Notions and Practices. We cannot eaſily be brought to believe that our Anceſtors were moſtly in the wrong, much leſs that thoſe with whom we daily converſe have ſo little ground for many of their Actions: eſpecially ſince we are as apt to love, or to admire the Opinions of Men as we do their Perſons, and that we are bred in the ſame Perſuaſion as well as they. On the contrary likewiſe, we frequently hate the Opinion for the ſake of the Perſon, and not leſs frequently the Perſon for the ſake of his Opinion; commonly for no better reaſon, than that we were differently bred, and accuſtom'd to think that one who errs in his Notions cannot be right in his Practice. Thus the Body of the People in all Places of the World do greedily imbibe whatever they are taught to imitate or to reſpect from their Infancy, and without further Evi-

dence

dence are ready to die for the Truth of it in old Age; which is to become properly Martyrs to a Habit, but not to Religion or Truth, unleſs by mere Accident. Nay, Cuſtom (which is not unfitly call'd a ſecond Nature) has impreſt ſuch a Stamp on the very Language of the Society, that what is deliver'd in theſe or thoſe Words, tho never ſo contradictory or abſtruſe, paſſes ordinarily for current Truth: but change your Terms, or uſe the Expreſſions of any other Party, and then if you ſpeak Oracles, whatever you ſay is reputed falſe, or at beſt ſuſpected. And indeed it cannot well be otherwiſe, ſince theſe Prejudices of all others muſt never be examin'd. You may reaſon your ſelf (for example) into what Religion you pleaſe; but, pray, what Religion will permit you to reaſon your ſelf out of it? I know ſome of 'em profeſs to allow a Liberty of examining, but their Proceedings not ſeldom ſhow their want of Sincerity: for let any of their Doctrines be call'd in doubt or deny'd after ſuch an Examination, and the Perſon that dos it will paſs his time very ill. If he's not put to Death, ſent into Baniſhment, depriv'd of his Employments, fin'd, or excommunicated, ac-

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cording

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cording as his Church has more or leſs Power; yet the leaſt he may expect, is to be abhorr'd and ſhun'd by the other Members of the Society (a thing in all People's power) which every Man has not Fortitude enough to bear for the ſake of the greateſt Truths; and the very Dearneſs of Acquaintance has often retain'd Men of admirable Underſtanding, in the external Profeſſion of the moſt abſurd and ridiculous Errors.

12. ADD to all this our own Fears and Vanity; our Ignorance of Things paſt, the Uncertainty of the preſent Time, and our ſollicitous Curioſity about what's to come; our Precipitation in judging, our Inconſiderateneſs in aſſenting, and want of due Suſpenſion in examining: which makes us not only be carry'd away by vulgar Errors in our Practice, to be miſled by our Senſes as well as by our Appetites, and to take numberleſs Falſitys for demonſtrated Truths in matters of Speculation; but likewiſe to be unjuſt to the Merit of others, to confound the Innocent with the Guilty, and generally to prefer the latter. And, as our Prejudices govern us, 'tis next to impoſſible we ſhould ever truly diſcern who is the innocent

innocent or guilty Perſon, who has got the better or the worſe of any Cauſe; ſince our firſt Queſtion is not what a Man has done or how, but who or whence he is? being ready to approve or condemn, to read over his Book or to throw it away, according to the Faction or Party he eſpouſes. This ſurely is neither fair nor manly dealing: and I hope no body will pretend that it is the way to diſcover Truth, no more than to continue ſtedfaſt in the Profeſſion of it; ſince it's hard to conceive (for example) by what means a Man can quit the Alcoran if he muſt never read the Bible; or if a Mahometan ought to read the Bible, I ſee no reaſon a Chriſtian ſhou'd fear to read the Alcoran; which is as true of all the Books in the World. It were ſuperfluous to ſpeak any thing more at large of ſuch common Places as our predominant Paſſions, the Contagion of the conſenting Multitude, or the Authority of our moſt mighty Maſter, the irreſiſtible Tyrant Cuſtom, which equally rules over Princes, Prieſts, and People. Letter I.

13. AFTER theſe Obſervations we may perceive the perillous Condition of every particular Man, and how impoſſible

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poſſible it appears for him to eſcape Infection, to obtain or to preſerve his Liberty; ſince all the other men of the World are agreed in the ſame Conſpiracy to deceive him. But tho a Perſon exempt from Prejudices ſeems in his outward Circumſtances to have little advantage over others; yet the cultivating of his Reaſon will be the chief Study of his Life, when on the one hand he conſiders that nothing can equal his inward Quiet and Joy, ſeeing almoſt all the reſt of his kind ever groveling in the dark, loſt in inextricable Mazes, agitated with innumerable Doubts, tormented with perpetual Fears, and not ſure to find any End of their Miſery even in Death: while, on the other hand, he himſelf is wholly ſecur'd by a right uſe of his Underſtanding againſt all theſe vain Dreams and terrible Phantoms, content with what he already knows, and pleas'd with new Diſcoverys, without thinking himſelf concern'd in things inſcrutable; not led like a Beaſt by Authority or Paſſion, but giving Law to his own Actions as a free and reaſonable Man.

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14. I AM as ſenſible as any in the World, SERENA, how little you need that I ſhou'd further inlarge on this Subject, you having already ſo much Knowledg and ſo few Prejudices, reaſoning ſo exactly, thinking ſo nicely, and ſpeaking ſo juſtly. Nor is it for your Inſtruction (I confeſs) that I have written now at your Deſire, but to ſhow you how much we agree in our Opinions; tho I am ready to acknowledg that you exceed moſt men as well as my ſelf in Quickneſs of Underſtanding, as you do all your own Sex by your many excellent Qualitys. In the matter of Prejudices, you ſee that at leaſt you are not in a worſe ſtate than other Perſons; or if your Circumſtances are better (as I'm ſure they are) nevertheleſs you muſt be content with the inward Pleaſure and Satisfaction of your own Mind, and not expect the Applauſe of the Publick, which wou'd rather expoſe you to Diſgrace or Danger, than do Juſtice to your incomparable Virtues. But this ought not to hinder your injoying the Happineſs of free Diſcourſe with any Perſons worthy of this Honor, whom you ſhall find to have as much Judgment and Diſ-

Letter I. cretion in reaſoning, as I have Zeal and Sincerity in profeſſing my ſelf, MADAM, to be your moſt faithful humble Servant.

LETTER

LETTER II.

The History of the Soul's Immortality among the Heathens.

1. IF the best Religion ought to be distinguish'd by the Purity and Integrity of its Morals, as well as by the Truth and Usefulness of its Doctrins, I am not acquainted with any body more sincerely pious than you, MADAM; which is a Testimony that all those, who have the Happiness to be acquainted with you, will readily grant to your Virtue. You have no Doubts, I'm certain, about the Soul's Immortality, and Christianity affords the best, the clearest Demonstration for it, even the Revelation of God himself. But you have often admir'd, you say, how the Heathens came by

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the Diſcovery of this Truth, ſince they had no ſuch Revelation from Heaven, and that what is ſo confidently ſaid of their learning it from the antient Books of the Jews, may be as eaſily deny'd as affirm'd; beſides that it is altogether groundleſs, no ſuch thing plainly appearing in theſe Books themſelves, tho it be manifeſt from the Pentateuch and the Series of other Hiſtory, that many Nations had their ſeveral Religions and Governments long before the Law was deliver'd to the Iſraelites. The ſame holds as true of the pretended Preaching of ABRAHAM, and of the Tradition of the Sons of NOAH; theſe being as deſtitute of any Evidence from matter of Fact, as in their Circumſtances utterly improbable. To have therefore the pleaſure, MADAM, of doing a Thing which you ſignify will be very agreeable to you, I ſhall lay this Subject before you as it appears to my ſelf, not from Conjectures and Suppoſitions, which give no body any real Conviction, however they may ſilence or amuſe; but I ſhall argue from unbiaſs'd Reaſons, and the greateſt Conſent of antient Writers.

2. TO

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2. TO Perſons leſs knowing and unprejudic'd than SERENA, it wou'd ſound ſtrange perhaps to hear me ſpeak of the Soul's Immortality, as of an Opinion, which, like ſome others in Philoſophy, had a Beginning at a certain time, or from a certain Author who was the Inventor thereof, and which was favour'd or oppos'd as Peoples Perſuaſion, Intereſt, or Inclination led 'em. But ſo it was among the Heathens, whatever you may think of the matter; and I have ſometimes conſider'd with aſtoniſhment the weakneſs of thoſe, who, contrary to their own Experience, ſeem'd afraid to acknowledg ſo much: as if the nature of the thing cou'd ſuffer any detriment from the Errors of others about it; or as if the Heathens had not entertain'd as extravagant Fancys about the very Being of God, and all the other Articles of our Religion, which no body takes to be any Argument againſt the Truth of them.

3. NOW tho the Egyptian Prieſts, the Chaldæan Magi, and the Indian Brachmans have diſputed among themſelves about the Honor of this In-

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vention (no leſs than thoſe of Harlem and Mentz about the beginning of Printing, and thoſe of China and Europe about the Origin of Artillery as well as of Printing, and other Nations about other Arts or Opinions) yet it is expreſly aſſerted by ARISTOTLE, and agreed by the generality of Writers as an uncontroverted Truth, that the moſt antient Greek Philoſophers did not dream of any Principle or actuating Spirit in the Univerſe it ſelf, no more than in any of the Parts thereof: but explain'd all the Phænomena of Nature by Matter and local Motion, Levity and Gravity, or the like; and rejected all that the Poets ſaid of the Gods, Dæmons, Souls, Ghoſts, Heaven, Hell, Viſions, Prophecys, and Miracles, as Fables invented at pleaſure, and Fictions to divert their Readers. After THALES, ANAXIMANDER, ANAXIMENES, and others had thus taught the Univerſe to be infinite, and Matter to be eternal, tho the Forms thereof were changeable, comes ANAXAGORAS (as it is unanimouſly own'd

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Των δε πρωτων φιλοσοφησαντων οι πλειστοι τας εν ὑλης εἰδεσι μονον οἰηθεντες ἀρχας εἰναι παντων. Metaph. I. 1.

by

by almoſt all Authors Heathen or Chriſtian) and to this Matter adds another Principle, which he call'd the MIND, as the Mover and Diſpoſer of the ſame: whereupon from ſo curious, ſo new, and ſtrange an Invention he was ſirnam'd [a] the MIND, ſome deriding and others admiring him for this Notion. We ſhall preſently ſhow how he came by this Diſcovery, tho moſt of thoſe that preceded him made infinite Matter the Principle of all things. 'Tis true that THALES maintain'd Matter to be eſſentially Water, as ANAXIMENES affirm'd it to be Air; and that by various Rarefactions and Condenſations all things were form'd out of theſe Elements, and reſolv'd into them again: but the meaning of both is, that the Particles of Matter are extremely ſubtil and in perpetual motion like Air or

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[a] Ariſtot. Metaph. l. 1. Plato in Phædone. Cic. de Nat. Deor. l. 1. Diogen. Laert. in Anaxag. Plutarch. in Pericle, & in placit. Philoſ. l. 1. Tertul. de Anima. Clem. Alex. Stromat. l. 2. Euſeb. de Præp. Evang. l. 14. Auguſt. de Civ. Dei, l. 8. Themiſt. Orat. 15. Etiam Proclus, Simplicius, cum multis aliis, tam Gentilibus quam Chriſtianis.

[b] Diogen. Laert. in Anaxag. Suidas in Anaxagora. Plutarch. in Pericle.

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4. ONE wou'd think that a Perſon, who deſerv'd ſo well of the Greeks, ſhou'd have met with ſutable Rewards and Applauſe; but whether it be that the other Philoſophers envy'd him, or that they wiſh'd there was no Spirit, or that he did not ſufficiently anſwer their Objections, or whatever were the reaſon, 'tis certain that he was unfortunate in his Reputation at that time and ever ſince, having bin very ill us'd by all Partys, for no cauſe that I can ſee, but that he did not fully come up to any of them. Some aſſert that he did not underſtand the corpuſcular Philoſophy, and that he eſpous'd the Opinion of the ſeparate Mind (for he was not the Author of it) to ſave himſelf the labor of underſtanding Mechanicks, of making long Deductions and accurate Obſervations, or prying into the Nature of Things. And as a Confirmation of this, they tell you that in other Matters his Imagination

was very groſs, witneſs his [1] teaching that the Sun was little bigger than the Peninſul of Peloponneſus; that the Earth was flat, and not round; that the Firmament was made of Stones, which were kept from falling by their ſwift Rotation; that in Generation the Males came from the Mother's right Side, and the Females from her left; that Snow was black; and that the Particles of all things, as of Blood, or Bones, or Gold, or Milk, were already form'd and exiſtent from Eternity, but that they conſtituted Blood, or Gold, Black or Green, as it happen'd that a ſufficient Number of them were brought together into one Body, ſo as greatly to ſurpaſs the Particles of any other ſort, which Opinion the Greeks expreſs by the Word *Homœomeria*. They further [2] laught at him for leaving his Grounds to the diſcretion of his Sheep, that he might be the more at leiſure for the Study of Aſtronomy, in which his Syſtem of the Sun and the Stones of the Firmament ſhows he was a wonder- Letter II.

[1] Vide Diog. Laert. in Anaxagora, & ad eum Annotatores.

[2] Diogen. Laert. in Anaxagora, &c.

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ful Proficient; they blam'd him for neglecting what was neceſſary and profitable in Life, and giving himſelf up to ſpeculative, abſtruſe, and remote Conſiderations, which are wholly uſeleſs and uncertain; and ſaid that he deſervedly wanted Bread in his old Age, having bin in danger of ſtarving without the aſſiſtance of his Scholar PERICLES. Thoſe who believ'd a divine intelligent Being, counted him a mungrel Philoſopher between themſelves and thoſe of the Ionick Sect, and were angry with him for not employing his ordering Mind on every occaſion; for, as often as he cou'd without it, he explain'd all the Phænomena of Nature by the Action and Reaction of Bodys on one another. PLATO (in his *Phædo*) introduces SOCRATES charging him with this very matter, and ſhowing no ſmall contempt for his Books. For the ſame reaſon he was not counted Orthodox by ſome Fathers of the Chriſtian Church, notwithſtanding his adding Spirit to Matter; and [1] IRENÆUS (in his ſecond Book againſt Hereſys) dos not only call him irreligious, but

[1] Lib. 2. de Hæreſ.

alſo

alſo in preciſe terms an Atheiſt, and ſays that he was ſo ſtil'd by others. CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS bears very hard upon him with Puns, which I ſhall here render word for word. [1]ANAXAGORAS, ſays he, *was the firſt who added Mind to things: but he did not preſerve the Dignity of the efficient Cauſe, deſcribing certain mindleſs Vortexes, together with a Mindleſneſs and Inaction of the Mind.* And ARISTOTLE compares him to a Poet that brings off his Hero with a Miracle, when no natural Cauſe can ſave him: for he affirms that [2]ANAXAGORAS *makes uſe of the Mind as of a Machine in the Formation of the World; and produces it only, when he doubts by what Cauſe it neceſſarily exiſts: but in other matters, he aſſigns any other Cauſe of the things which are made rather than the Mind.* However, there wanted not thoſe among the Antients and Moderns who entertain'd a more favorable

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[1] Επει και Αναξαγορας πρωτος επεσησε τον Νουν τοις πραγμασιν; αλλ' ουδε ουτος επηρησε την αξιαν την ποιητικην, Δινας τινας ανοησους αναζωγραφων, συν τη του Νω απραξια τε και ανοια. Stromat. l. 2.

[2] Αναξαγορας τε γαρ μηχανη χρηται τω Νω προς την κοσμοποιιαν; και οταν απορηση δια την αιτιαν εξ αναγκης εστι, τοτε ελκει αυτον: εν δε τοις αλλοις, παντα μαλλον αιτιαται των γινομενων η νουν. Metaph. l. 1.

Opinion

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Opinion of him, and the great Dr. BURNET (in his [1] Archæology) says that his Sirname of the Mind is far more honorable than those of Africanus and Asiaticus: nor did ANAXAGORAS fail of setting a just Value on his own Worth; for after his Exile (whether for Atheism in ungodding the Planets, or for Treason in conspiring with PERICLES) when some body told him that he was depriv'd of the Athenians, he immediately answer'd, [2] *not I of them, but they of me.*

5. PHERECYDES of the Island Syrus, as we are inform'd by [3] CICERO and others, was the first among the Greek Philosophers that committed the Immortality of human Souls to writing: for tho THALES is said to have bin of the same [4] Opinion, yet he publish'd nothing; and MAXIMUS TYRIUS

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[1] L. 1. c. 10.

[2] Diogenes Laertius in Anaxagora; ου μενουν, αλλα εκεινοι εμου.

[3] Credo equidem etiam alios; sed (quod Litteris extet) Pherecydes Syrius primum dixit Animos Hominum esse sempiternos. Hanc Opinionem Discipulus ejus Pythagoras maxime confirmavit. *Tusc. Quæst. l.* 1.

[4] Ενιοι δε και αυτον πρωτον ειπειν φασιν αθανατους τας ψυχας, ων εστι χοιριλος ὁ ποιητης. Diogen. Laert. in Thalete.

(in

(in his twenty eighth Diſſertation) af- Letter
firms with CICERO that PYTHA- II.
GORAS *the Samian*, the Diſciple of
PHERECYDES, [1] *was the firſt among the Greeks who durſt openly maintain that the Body only dy'd, but that the Soul was immortal, neither ſubject to Age nor Corruption, and that it exiſted before it came hither.* You ſee, it was ſo great an Innovation, that he was reckon'd a bold Man, who had Courage enough to vent it. Afterwards PLATO and the reſt greedily imbrac'd this Doctrine; and we know how widely the Grecians cou'd ſpread it by their numberleſs Colonys in Aſia, in Italy, in Sicily, in Gaule, and other Parts of the World, as well as by their Poets, Orators, Hiſtorians, and Philoſophers, whoſe Works were ſo much admir'd by other Nations for their Subtlity, Politeneſs, and Learning.

6. BUT the next Queſtion is, whence ANAXAGORAS and his Followers (who pretended to no divine Revelations) borrow'd this Invention.

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[1] Πυθαγορας δε ὁ Σαμιος πρωτος εν τοις Ἑλλησιν ἐτολμησεν εἰπειν ὅτι ἀυτῳ το μεν σωμα τεθνηξεται, ἡ δε ψυχη ἀναπτασα οἰχησεται ἀθανης και ἀγηρως, και γας εἰναι ἀυτην πριν ηκειν δενρο.

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It is evident from antient Monuments that he and the other Philoſophers of his ſide, with the Poets and Mythologiſts, learnt it partly from the Magi, when the Perſians tranſported their Arms into Greece, and partly from the Prieſts of Egypt when they travel'd for Knowledg into that Country. [1] THALES had his Philoſophy of the Egyptian Prieſts. PLATO was in Egypt a long time, he has a great many of the Egyptian Doctrins in his Works, and is acknowledg'd by all to have learnt of them and of their Diſciple PYTHAGORAS as well as of the Perſian Magi, whatever he has deliver'd about the Immortality of the Soul, the different Manſions of the Juſt and Unjuſt in a future State, the Expiations of Crimes, the Lakes and Rivers, the Meadows, Caves, and Monſters of

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[1] Diogen. Laert. in Thalete. Clem. Alexand. Strom. l. 1. Euſeb. de Præpar. Evangel. l. 10. Joſeph. l. 1. contra Ap.

[2] Diod. Sic. l. 1. Cicero l. 5. de Finibus. Lib. de Senectute. Tuſc. Quæſt. l. 1. Ariſtot. Metaph. l. 1. Diog. Laert. in Platone. Quintilian. lib. 1. Clem. Alexandrin. in Admonit. ad Gent. Valer. Max. l. 8. Philoſtrat. vit. Appollon. lib. 1. Hieronymus lib. 2. Ep. 1. ad Paulinam. Lactant. lib. 4. cum multis aliis.

Hell,

Hell. [1] PYTHAGORAS, one of the greateſt Travellers in the World, convers'd with the Chaldæan Magi, the Indian Gymnoſophiſts, and particularly with the Egyptian Prieſts and Prophets, ſuffering himſelf to be [2] circumcis'd that he might be admitted to hear the ſecret Doctrins of the latter, which they wou'd not communicate to him without this Condition. I will not here inſiſt on the Poets, as ORPHEUS, HOMER, or any other of the moſt antient, who yet are all confeſt to have borrow'd their Fictions from the Egyptians, as may be ſeen in the firſt Book of DIODORUS SICULUS. ANAXAGORAS was firſt taught by the Magi, having bin twenty years of Age at the Expedition of XERXES, and (as [3] DIONYSIUS PHALEREUS relates) he begun to philoſophize in Athens at thoſe Years. He was a Hearer of ANAXIMENES, and (as THEODORET and AMMIANUS MAR- Letter II.

[1] Herodot. in Thalia. Diod. Sic. l. 1. Cicero de Finibus l. 5. Plin. Hiſt. Nat. l. 36. etiam lib. 25. Diogen. Laert. in Pythag. Iſocrat. in laude Puſiridis, & alii paſſim.

[2] Clem. Alex. Theodoret. in Serm. contra Græcos.

[3] Diog. Laert. in Anaxagora.

CELLINUS

Letter II. CELLINUS inform us) had travel'd likewiſe into [1] Egypt; ſo that we plainly perceive whence he had his Notion of the ordering Mind. The Greeks learnt ſeveral things of the Magi in thoſe Days, which afterwards inſpir'd others with the Deſire of going into thoſe Parts for perfecting their Knowledg.

7. BUT the great Doubt ſtill remains, who were the firſt Inventors of the Doctrin of Spirits among the Heathens, the Egyptian Prieſts, the Chaldæan Magi, or the Indian Bramins. PAUSANIAS is very poſitive in favour of the two laſt: [2] *For*, ſays he, *I know the Chaldæan and Indian Magi to be the firſt who affirm'd that the Soul of Man was immortal; and of this they perſuaded as well other Greeks, as eſpecially* PLATO *the Son of* ARISTON. A few more Greeks beſides PAUSANIAS (and from their Authority ſome

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[1] Theodoret. de Græc. Affect: Serm. 2. Theodor. Meliteniot. Proæm. in Aſtronomiam. Amm. Marcel. l. 22.

[2] Εγω δε Χαλδαιους και Ινδων τους Μαγους πρωτους οιδα εισηγησας, ως αθανατος εστιν ανθρωπου ψυχη: και σφισι και Ελληνων αλλοι τε επειθοντο, και ουχ ηκιστα Πλατων ὁ Αριστωνος. Meſſeniac.

of

of the Roman Writers) believ'd the Chaldæans to have bin at leaſt the Inventors of Aſtrology, if not of the Soul's Immortality. But we might produce an Army of Witneſſes, if the things did not ſpeak themſelves, to prove that the Chaldæans (to whom the Bramins [1] were Diſciples) had all their Learning and Religion, and conſequently the Immortality of the Soul, no leſs than Aſtrology, from the Egyptians. We cou'd ſhow that MACROBIUS [2] did not exaggerate, when he call'd Egypt *the Mother of the Sciences*, and its Inhabitants *the Parents of all the Arts in Philoſophy, the firſt of all Men that dar'd to ſearch and meaſure the Heavens*, and *the only Perſons skill'd in all Divine things*; that is to ſay, the beſt Divines then in the World. But ſuch a Diſquiſition not being abſolutely ne-

Letter II.

[1] Κλεαρχος δε ὁ Σολευς, ἐν τῳ περι παιδειας, και τους Γυμνοσοφιστας απογονους ειναι των Μαγων φησιν. Diog. Laert. in Proæmio Hiſtor. Philoſophorum.

[2] Dies quidem hic intercalaris, antequam quintus Annus incipiat inſerendus, cum Ægypti matris Artium ratione conſentit. *Saturnal. lib.* 1. *c.* 15. Plato Ægyptios omnium Philoſophiæ Diſciplinarum Parentes ſecutus eſt. *Somn. Scip. l.* 1. *c.* 19. Quos conſtat primos omnium Cœlum ſcrutari & metiri auſos. *Ibid. c.* 21. Imitatus Ægyptios ſolos divinarum rerum omnium conſcios. *Saturnal. l.* 1. *c.* 14.

Letter II. ceſſary here, we muſt be content with juſt what makes for our purpoſe.

8. THOSE who attributed the Invention of Religion to the Chaldæans, had no reaſon but their becoming ſo famous for Aſtrology (which they firſt taught the Greeks) and the mighty Noiſe which they made every where about Spirits and Dæmons, their Hierarchy of Angels, the final Conflagration of the World, and ſeveral other Notions like to theſe. But this Aſſertion is eaſily overthrown by more antient and numerous Authoritys. HERODOTUS, the Father of Hiſtory, ſays that [1] *the Egyptians were the firſt of Men who inſtituted Aſſemblys, Shows, and Pilgrimages in honour of the Gods*, and *that from them the Greeks have learnt it; of which* he alledges *for a Proof, that theſe Things were practis'd from remote Times by the Egyptians, whereas but very lately by the Greeks.* 'Tis confeſt by all that

[1] Πανηγυρεις δε αγα και πομπας και προσαγωγας πρωτοι ανθρωπων Αιγυπτιοι εισι οι ποιησαμενοι; και παρα τουτων οι Ελληνες μεμαθηκασι. Τεκμηριον δε μοι τουτο τοδε. Αι μεν γαρ φαινονται εκ πολλου τε χρονου ποιευμεναι, αι δε Ελληνικαι νεωστι επoιηθησαν. l. 2.

the

the Athenians had a great part of their Worſhip from their King CECROPS an Egyptian; they had many Cuſtoms from DANAUS and his Daughters of the ſame Country, and the Eleuſinian and Samothracian Myſterys were only Copys from thoſe of ISIS and OSIRIS. As to Aſtrology particularly, HERODOTUS maintains, [1] That *the Egyptians firſt invented what Month and Day ſhou'd belong to each God, and on whatever Day any Perſon was to be born, what was to be his Lot, what Death he ſhou'd die, and how he ſhou'd live; and that theſe things were made uſe of by ſuch Greeks as were addicted to Poetry.* To the ſame purpoſe DION CASSIUS ſays, [1] That *the Diſpoſition of the Days according to the ſeven Planets was the Invention of the Egyptians, tho not communicated to all other People but very lately; and that it was utterly unknown to*

Letter II.

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[1] Και ταδε αλλα Αιγυπτιοισι εστι εξευρημενα: μεις τε και ἡμερη ἑκαστη θεων ὁτευ εστι; και τῃ εκαστος ἡμερῃ γενομενος ὁτεοισι εγκυρησει, και ὁκως τελευτησει, και ὁκοιος τις εσται. Και τουτοισι των Ἑλληνων ὁι εν ποιησει γενομενοι εχρησαντο. Lib. 2.

[2] Το δε δη ες τους αστερας τους ἑπτα τους πλανητας ωνομασμενους τας ἡμερας ανακεισθαι, κατεστη μεν ὑπ' Αιγυπτιων, παρεστι δε και επι παντας ανθρωπους ου παλαι ποτε, ὡς λογῳ ειπειν, αρξαμενον. Ὁι γουν αρχαιοι Ἑλληνες ουδαμη αυτο, ὁσα γε εμε ειδεναι ηπισταντο. Lib. 37.

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the old Grecians. HERODOTUS again acquaints us with what the Egyptians affirm'd from their own moſt antient Records, [1] That *they had firſt in uſe the Sirnames of the twelve greater Gods, and that the Greeks borrow'd theſe things of them: that they were likewiſe the firſt who appointed Altars, and Statues, and Shrines for the Gods, and to carve Animals in Stone.* This is further confirm'd by LUCIAN, whoſe Words are theſe: [2] *The Egyptians are ſaid to be the firſt of Men who had the Knowledg of the Gods, who built Temples, and inſtituted Shrines and Aſſemblys. They were likewiſe the firſt who underſtood the ſacred Names* or Words, *and the firſt that taught the ſacred Diſcourſes* or Language. *But not long after the Aſſyrians learnt the Doctrin of the Gods from the Egyptians; they*

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[1] Δυωδεκα θεων επωνυμιας ελεγον πρωτους Αιγυπτιους νομισαι, και Ἑλληνας παρ' εκεινων αναλαβειν: βωμους τε και αγαλματα και νηους θεοισι απονεμαι σφεας πρωτους, και ζωα εν λιθοισι εγγλυφαι. Lib. 2.

[2] Πρωτοι μεν ανθρωπων Αιγυπτιοι λεγονται θεων τε εννοιην λαβειν, και ιερα ιδρυσασθαι, και τεμενεα και πανηγυρεις αποδειξαι. Πρωτοι δε και ονοματα ιερα εγνωσαν, και λογους ιερους ελεξαν. Μετα δε και πολλοστω χρονω παρ' Αιγυπτιων λογον Ασσυριοι ες θεους ηκουσαν, και ιρα και νηους ηγειραν. εν τοισι και αγαλματα εθεντο, και ξοανα εποιησαντο: το δε παλαιον και παρ' Αιγυπτιοισι αξοανοι γεοι ησαν. De Dea Syria.

Letter II.

also built Temples and Shrines, and in these they plac'd Images and erected Statues: yet of old the Temples of the Egyptians were without any Statues. Here are decisive Passages against the Assyrians and the Greeks. But let's hear [1] DIODORUS SICULUS of the Magi in particular. *The Egyptians,* says he, *affirm that many Colonys were spread over the World out of their Country. For* BELUS, *who is reckon'd the Son of* NEPTUNE *and* LIBYA, *led a Colony into the Land of Babylon; and having fixt his Seat near the River Euphrates, he did after the manner of the Egyptians institute Priests, exempting them from publick and expensive Offices; and by the Babylonians they are stil'd Chaldeans, who observe the Stars after the Example of the Priests, and natural Philosophers, and Astrologers of Egypt.* This is back'd

[1] Οἱ δὲ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ φασὶ καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἀποικίας πλείστας ἐξ Αἰγύπτου καὶ πᾶσαν διασπαρῆναι τὴν οἰκουμένην: εἰς Βαβυλῶνα μὲν γὰρ ἀγανὴν ἀποικίαν Βῆλον τὸν νομιζόμενον Ποσειδῶνος εἶναι καὶ Λιβύης: ὃν παρὰ τὸν Εὐφράτην ποταμὸν καθιδρυσάμενον, τοὺς δὲ ἱερεῖς καλεῖσθαι παραπλησίως τοῖς κατ' Αἴγυπτον ἀφειμένους, καὶ πάσης λειτουργίας ἀπολελυμένους, οὓς Βαβυλώνιοι καλοῦσι Χαλδαίους: τὰς τε παρατηρήσεις τῶν ἄστρων τοὺς ποιήσασθαι, μιμησαμένους τοὺς παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις ἱερεῖς, καὶ φυσικοὺς, ἔτι δὲ Ἀστρολόγους. Lib. I.

Letter II. by [1] PAUSANIAS, who says, That BELUS *the Babylonian had his Name from* BELUS *an Egyptian the Son of* LIBYA. And [2] DIODORUS repeats once again, That *the Egyptians said the Chaldeans of Babylon were descended from them, and that they learnt from the Egyptian Priests that Astrology which gave them so much Reputation.* To tire you with no more Proofs, the Egyptians had many opportunitys to spread their Doctrins in Asia as well as in Africa (especially before the Assyrian Monarchy) by the prodigious Conquests of SESOSTRIS and his Successors even into India, much further than ALEXANDER the Great cou'd penetrate many Ages afterwards. SESOSTRIS was likewise in Thracia, and some other Parts of Europe. [3] NECEPSOS, another Egyptian King, is related to have taught many mysterious Rites to the Magi, the Sciences not being then un-

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[1] Ὁ εν Βαβυλωνι Βηλος απο ανδρος Αιγυπτιε Βηλε τε Λιβυης ονομα εσχεν. Messeniac.

[2] Φασι δε τες εν Βαβυλωνι Χαλδαιες αποικες Αιγυπτιων ονλας, την Δοξαν εχειν την περι της Αστρολογιας παρα των Ἱερεων μαθοντας των Αιγυπτιων. Lib. 1.

[3] Quique Magos docuit Mysteria vana Necepsos.
Auson. Epist. 19.

worthy

worthy of Princes; for [1]PORPHYRY tells us, That *the Race of the Magi was ſo potent and honorable among the Perſians, that* DARIUS *the Son of* HYSTASPES *caus'd to be inſcrib'd among other things, on his own Monument, that he was Maſter to the Magi.* I know the Jews and a world of Chriſtians pretend that the Egyptians had all their Learning from ABRAHAM, a Chaldean by Nation, tho not by Profeſſion, a Stranger who liv'd there only two years, and who probably ſpoke a different Language. The Pentateuch makes no mention of his Learning; or if he underſtood Aſtronomy or any other Science, why did he not take the ſame pains to inſtruct his own Nation as he did the Egyptians? for the Jews were of all Eaſtern People the moſt illiterate; whereas it is recorded in the Acts of the Apoſtles for the Honor of MOSES, not that he follow'd the Doctrins of ABRAHAM, but that he was educated and had excell'd in all the Learning of the Egyptians. The

Letter II.

C. 7. v. 22.

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[1] Οὗτοι δὲ μεγα καὶ σεβασμιον γενος τῶν παρα Περσαις νενομισται, ὡστε καὶ Δαρειον τον Ὑστασπε επιγραψαι τῳ μνηματι, προς τοις αλλοις, ὁτι καὶ Μαγικων γενοιτο Διδασκαλος. De Abſtin. Animal. l. 4.

Letter II.

Pentateuch it self makes mention of their Religion and Sciences long before the Law was deliver'd to MOSES, which is an indisputable Testimony of their Antiquity before any Nation in the World.

9. HAVING thus done Justice to the Egyptians, and proving them to have bin the Fountains of Learning to all the East, the Authors of the Chaldæan and Greek Religions; I come now, SERENA, to show that they were the first among the Heathens, who particularly asserted the Immortality of the Soul, with all that depends on it, as Heaven, Hell, and the intermediate Spaces, Specters, Visions, Sorcery, Necromancy, and all kinds of Divination. HERODOTUS, who liv'd long in their Country, who convers'd familiarly with their Priests, [1] who carefully distinguishes what he saw, and ask'd, and examin'd, from Hearsay and Report, and who had opportunitys to search into their Antiquity and Opinions the best

[1] Μεχρι μεν τουτου οψις δε ἐμοι, και γνωμη, και ἱστοριη ταυτα λεγουσι εστι: τοδε απο τουδε, Αιγυπτιους ερχομαι λογους ερεων κατα ηκουον, προσεσται δε τοι και αυτοισι τι και της εμης οψιος. L. 2.

of

of any body, is very clear and positive. Letter II.
[1] *The Egyptians,* says he, *were the first who maintain'd this Opinion, that* THE SOUL OF MAN IS IMMORTAL; *that the Body being dead, it removes into some other Animal that is born; and that when it has taken its Circuit thro all terrestrial, marine, and volatile Bodys, it enters again into the Body of some Man that is born. Now this Course is perform'd in the space of three thousand Years. Certain Greeks have made use of this Doctrin, as if it were of their own Invention, some sooner and others later; whose Names, tho known to me, I purposely forbear to write.* DIODORUS SICULUS acquaints us who [2] they were: and here, to name no other, we see whence PYTHAGORAS had his Transmigration, of which I shall have

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[1] Πρωτοι δε και τονδε τον λογον Αιγυπτιοι εισι ειποντες, ὡς ανθρωπȣ ψυχη αθανατος εστι; τȣ σωματος δε καταφθινοντος, ες αλλο ζωον αιει γινομενον εσδυεται; επεαν δε περιελθη παντα τα χερσαια, και τα θαλασσια, και τα πετεινα, αυτις ες ανθρωπȣ σωμα γινομενον εσδυνειν. Την περιειλησιν δε αυτη γινεσθαι εν τρισχιλιοισι ετεσι. Τȣτῳ τῳ λογῳ εισι οἱ Ἑλληνων εχρησαντο, οἱ μεν πρωτερον, οἱ δε ὑστερον, ὡς ιδιῳ εαυτων εοντι, των εγω ειδως τα ȣνοματα ȣ γραφω. L. 2.

[2] Orpheus, Musæus, Melampus, Dædalus, Homerus, Lycurgus, Solon, Plato, Pythagoras, Eudoxus, Democritus, Ænopis. l. 1. Alii alios nominant.

occasion

Letter II.

occaſion to make ſome mention before I have done. Thus it was with other Doctrins. Yet, as I hinted before, becauſe the Greeks learnt moſt of their Aſtronomy and Aſtrology from the Magi, they imagin'd them to have invented thoſe Sciences: for by reaſon of their Colonys in Aſia and in the Ionian Iſlands, they were acquainted with the Magi, much ſooner than with the Egyptian Prophets, having little knowledg of the latter, till Egypt was conquer'd by the Perſians, and till the time of ALEXANDER the Great; travelling afterwards very frequently thither, and in great numbers.

10. THE Getes learnt the Immortality of the Soul from their Countryman ZAMOLXIS, who was Servant and Diſciple to PYTHAGORAS, and who ſo wrought by his [1] Addreſs on thoſe Scythian Nations, that they not only receiv'd Laws from him, and the Doctrin of a future State; but ſo great was their Reſpect towards him

[1] Herodot. l. 4. Strabo l. 16. Mnaſeas & Hellanicus in Etymologico magno. Porphyr. in vita Pythag. Diog. Laert. in Pythagora.

for

for these Benefits, that after his Death they worship'd him as a God. This Opinion of changing the present Life for a better, made them so fearless in Battel, and so ready to [1] expose themselves to the greatest Dangers, being continually fir'd to a noble Emulation by their Poets, who (like the [2] Gallick Bards) eterniz'd the Memory of those magnanimous Worthys that lost their Lives in War. The Druids of Gaule (of whom were issu'd those in Britain) who were of the same Persuasion with the Getes, and who taught the Transmigration of Souls, borrow'd their Letters from the Greeks, and probably their Philosophy, as JULIUS CÆSAR in [3] expres's words informs us. This might easily be done by means of the most antient Greek Colony of Marseilles, famous for Arts and Learning. They might have a Communication with those of the Grecian Country and Religion behind them in Italy. And from their Neighbors the Germans

Letter II.

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[1] Pompon. Mela l. 2. c. 2. cum aliis pæne innumeris.

[2] Cæsar de Bello Gal. l. 6. Pompon. Mela l. 3. c. 2. Amm. Marcel. l. 15. Plinius aliique.

[3] Cum in reliquis fere Rebus, publicis privatisque Rationibus, Græcis Literis utantur. Lib. 6. de Bello Gallico.

(who

Letter II.

(who are often comprehended under the name of Celts as well as themſelves) they might likewiſe receive the Doctrin of ZAMOLXIS. But however this cou'd happen, LUCAN in the firſt Book of his *Pharſalia*, ſings of all thoſe Nations in this manner.

The numerous Peoples of the frozen North
Are truly happy in their fond Miſtake,
Not fearing Death that dreadfulleſt of Fears.
Hence their rough Minds are always bent on Arms,
Hence their ſtout Heroes ſmiling meet their Death,
And hence they think it Cowardiſe to ſpare
A Life, that's certain to return again.

II. BUT tho I have trac'd this Opinion to its Source, yet your Queſtion, MADAM, is ſtill unreſolv'd, till I

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[1] ——— Certe populi, quos deſpicit Arctos,
Felices errore ſuo, quos, ille Timorum
Maximus, haud urget Lethi metus. Inde ruendi
In Ferrum mens prona viris, Animæque capaces
Mortis, & ignavum redituræ parcere vitæ.

explain

explain how the Egyptians themſelves cou'd frame ſuch a Notion without Divine Revelation. To this I anſwer, that their Funeral Rites, and their hiſtorical Method of preſerving the Memory of deſerving Perſons, ſeem in all probability to have bin the occaſional Cauſes of this Belief. Their way of burying, you know, was by embalming the dead Bodys, which they depoſited in ſubterranean Grots, where they continu'd intire for thouſands of Years; ſo that before any Notion of ſeparate or immortal Souls, the common Language was, that ſuch a one was under ground, that he was carry'd over the River Acheruſia by CHARON (the Title of the publick Ferryman for this purpoſe) and laid happily to reſt in the Elyſian Fields, which were the common Burial-place near Memphis. Among other Methods they had of perpetuating Events, the ſureſt of all was to impoſe the Names of memorable Perſons and Things on the Conſtellations, as the only eternal Monuments, not ſubject to the Violence of Men or Brutes, nor to the Injury of Time or Weather. This Cuſtom was deriv'd from them to other Nations, who chang'd indeed the Names, but gave new ones to the Stars for Letter II.

Letter II. for the ſame end. Thus ISIS, OSIRIS, ANUBIS, THOVTH, and the like, were at firſt pointed to above, and their Hiſtorys explain'd: SUPHIS, and SETHOS, and PHANES, and MOSES were ſaid to be under ground. But the unconſidering Vulgar hearing the Learned conſtantly talk of certain Perſons in the Stars, believ'd 'em at laſt to be really there, and that all the others were under ground; becauſe, as CICERO ſays, [1] *The Bodys of the Dead falling on the Ground, and being cover'd with Earth, they thought that they led the reſt of their Lives below:* from which Perſuaſion he obſerves many Errors to have proceeded, eſpecially the Fables and Terrors of Hell.

12. ABOUT the Life of thoſe in the Stars I ſhall ſpeak more largely another time, when I have leiſure to write the Diſcourſe I promis'd you about *the Origin of Idolatry*. But at preſent I ſhall proceed with thoſe Funeral Rites, which were the occaſion of ſo many

[1] In Terram cadentibus Corporibus, hiſce humo tectis, ſub Terra cenſebant reliquam viram agi Mortuorum. *Tuſc. Quæſt. l.* 1.

Opinions

Opinions relating to a future State in Egypt, in other Parts of Africa, over all Asia, in many places of Europe, and particularly in Greece. DIODORUS SICULUS, in the first Book of his unvaluable *Library*, very largely relates the Funeral Rites of the Egyptians, especially their manner of embalming Bodys to such Perfection, that after many Ages the same Likeness and Lineaments continue: after which he proceeds in these words. [1] *The Relations of the Body that is to be bury'd, acquaint before-hand the Judges, and the Kindred as well as the Friends of the dead Person with the Day of his Burial: and after telling his Name, they certify that he is at that time to pass over the Lake. After this there assemble above forty Judges, and sitting in a certain Semicircle, prepar'd on the side of the Lake, the Boat, which is provided in the mean while*

Letter II.

[1] Τὸν δὲ μελλοντος θάπτεσθαι σωματος οἱ συγγενεις προλεγουσι την ἡμεραν τῆς ταφῆς τοις δὲ Δικασταις και τοις συγγενεσιν, ἐπ δὲ φιλοις τὸ τετελευτηκοτος; και διαβεβαιουνται, λεγοντες ὁτι διαβαινειν μελλει την λιμνην τὸνομα τὸ τελευτηκοτος. Ἐπειτα συναγομενων δικαστων πλειω των τετταρακοντα, και καθιζοντων ἐπ τινος ἡμικυκλιου, κατεσκευασμενε περαν της λιμνης; ἣ μεν βαρις κατεσκευασμενη περαιουν ὑπο των ταυτην

Letter II.

while by those to whom that Care belongs, is brought thither by the Ferryman, whom the Egyptians in their Language call CHARON. *Wherefore they say that* ORPHEUS, *having seen this Custom when he had formerly travel'd into Egypt, compos'd his Fable about Hell, partly imitating these things, and partly inventing out of his own Head.* Then DIODORUS goes on to tell that every body may accuse or defend the dead Person, who, if he be prov'd to have led a bad Life, is deny'd the usual sort of Burial. From this Prohibition of Burial in Egypt, which was afflicting to the Living and scandalous to the Dead, the Greeks (and from them the Romans) had their Notion that the Souls of the unbury'd were disquieted, and cou'd not pass over the River into the Elysian Fields, turning a noble Practice into a senseless Fable. Hence you may likewise perceive how they came by the Notion of infernal Judges, which Office

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ταυτην εχοντων την επιμελειαν; εφεστηκε δε ταυτη Ορφευς, ὁν Αιγυπτιοι κατα την ιδιαν Διαλεκτον ονομαζουσι Χαρωνα. Διο και φασιν Ορφεα το παλαιον εις Αιγυπτον αποδημησαντα και θεασαμενον ταυτα τα νομιμα, μυθοποιησαι τα καθ' ᾅδου; τα μεν μιμησαμενον, τα δ' αυτον ιδια πλασαμενον.

they

they bestow'd on MINOS, ÆACUS, and RHADAMANTHUS, the most just Princes among the Greeks. But not to digress, if any false Accuser appear'd, he was severely punish'd; and if none accus'd the dead, then he was put into his Coffin, and his Relations throwing off their Mourning, made a solemn Panegyrick, not magnifying his Dignity or Family, but commending his Education, Piety, Justice, Temperance, and other Virtues. After relating more Particularitys to our purpose, DIODORUS makes this most judicious Observation. [1] *The Greeks,* says he, *in their commentitious Fables, and by their celebrated Poets have disguiz'd the Truth of these things, as of what relates to the Honor of the Just and Disgrace of the Wicked; and therefore they have bin so far from being able by these means to lead Men to the best sort of Life, that they are themselves despis'd by the Bad, and derided for their Folly. But among*

Letter II.

[1] Ὁ μεν γαρ Ἑλληνες μυθοις πεπλασμενοις και ποιητικις διαβεβλημενοις την περι τουτων πιστιν παρεδωκαν, την τε των ευσεβων τιμην, και την των πονηρων τιμοριαν. Τοιγαρουν ουχ' οἱται εσχυσαι δυναται ταυτα προτρεψασθαι επι τον αριστον βιον τους ανθρωπους; αλλα τοὐναντιον ὑπο των φαυλων χλευαζομενοι, καταφρονησεως τυγχανουσι.

Παρα

Letter II.

the Egyptians, the Puniſhment of the Wicked and the Recompence of the Good, not being contain'd in Fables, but exhibited to our Eyes, each Party is every day put in mind of their Dutys; and by this Cuſtom there grows the beſt and moſt uſeful Reformation of Manners. Lower in the ſame Book he gives a Catalogue of ſuch celebrated Greek Philoſophers and Legiſlators as were initiated in the Egyptian Learning; and repeats again, that ORPHEUS [1] *brought from thence the greateſt part of the myſterious Rites* (us'd in Greece) *with the Orgys that are celebrated at their Explanation, and the Fictions of Hell.* Somewhat lower again, he, that was an Eye-witneſs, aſſures us, That [2] *the Meadow, which was the feign'd Habitation of the Dead, is a place by the Lake call'd Acheruſia near Memphis,*

Παρα δε τοις Αιγυπτιοις ο μυθωδης αλλ' ὀρθης τοις μεν πονηροις της κολασεως, τοις δ' αγαθοις της τιμης κοινης, καθ' ἑκασην ἡμεραν αμφοτερων των ἑαυτοις προσηκοντων ὑπομεμνησκονται; και δια τουτου τα τροπα μειζων και συμφορωτατη Διορθωσις γινεται των ηθων. Lib. 1.

[1] Ορφεα μεν γαρ των μυστικων τελετων τα πλειστα, και τα περι την ἑαυτου πλανην ὀργιαζομενα, και την των εν ᾅδου μυθολογιαν απενεγκασθαι. Ibid.

[2] Λειμωνα δε νομιζειν και την μυθολογουμενην οικησιν των μακαρων τον παρα την λιμνην τοπον την καλουμενην

phis, which City is surrounded with most beautiful Meads and Groves of Lotus and Calamus. Nor is it improperly said that the Dead inhabit those places; for that the greatest part and the most sumptuous of the Egyptian Burials are made here, the dead Bodys being transported over the River and Acherusian Lake, and laid there in Grots made for that purpose. The other Fictions of the Greeks about Hell, do likewise agree with those things which are to this day perform'd in Egypt: for the Vessel for transporting the Bodys is call'd Baris, and a piece of Mony to the value of an Obolus is paid for fraught to the Ferryman, who in their Country Language is call'd CHARON. *There is also near those places, as they say, the Fane of* Letter II.

 darksom

μενην μεν Αχερουσιαν, πλησιον δε ουσαν της Μεμφεως, οντων περι αυτην λειμωνων καλλιστων, ἑλων, και λωτου και καλαμου. Ακολουθως δ'ειρησθαι και το κατοικειν τους τελευτησαντας εν τουτοις τοις τοποις: δια το τας των Αιγυπτιων τας πλειστας και μεγιστας ενταυθα γινεσθαι, διαπορθμευομενων μεν των νεκρων δια τε του ποταμου και της Αχερουσιας λιμνης, τιθεμενων δε των σωματων εις τας ενταυθα κειμενας θηκας. Συμφωνειν δε και τ'αλλα τα παρα τοις Ἑλλησι καθ' ἁδου μυθολογουμενα τοις ετι νυν γινομενοις κατ' Αιγυπτον: το μεν γαρ διακομιζον τα σωματα πλοιον, Βαριν καλεισθαι; το δ'επιβαθρον νομισμα τον οβολον τῳ πορθμει διδοσθαι, καλουμενῳ κατα την εγχωριον διαλεκτον Χαρωνι. Ειναι δε λεγουσι πλησιον των τοπων τουτων και σκοτιας Ἡκατης ἱερον, και πυλας Κω-

κυτου

Letter II.

darksom HECATE, *and the Gates of* COCYTUS *and* LETHE *made fast with brazen Bolts. There are also other Portals of Truth, and near these the Statue of Justice without a Head. There yet remain among the Egyptians several other things that gave occasion to our Fables, keeping still the same Names, and the same Actions being perform'd.* Here's a most natural Account of the Rise of those Poetical Fictions concerning the Elysian Fields, CHARON and his Passage-mony, with the different Mansions of departed Souls, and the several Portals of Hell. All other Origins are false, or manifestly absurd and precarious. This whole Book of the most accurate DIODORUS deserves to be read: but I have transcrib'd enough for my purpose.

13. THUS have I shown you, MADAM, how this Opinion of the Souls Immortality, and the Consequences

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κυτȣ και Λητης, διειλεμμενας χαλκειοις οχευσιν: ὑπαρχειν δε και αλλας πυλας Αληθειας, και πλησιον τȣτων ειδωλον ακεφαλον ἑσταναι Δικης: πολλα δε και αλλα των μεμυθολογημενων διαμεινειν παρ' Αιγυπτιοις, τηρȣμενης ἑτι της προσηγοριας και της εν τῳ πραττειν ενεργειας. Ibid.

of the ſame, was introduc'd from the Egyptians among the Grecians, ſpread by the latter in their Colonys in Aſia and Europe, and deliver'd to the Romans, who from the Greeks had their Religion and Laws. I mark'd the Progreſs of it among the Scythians, Germans, Gauls, and Britains. I have likewiſe prov'd how from Egypt, the Place of its Birth, it travel'd to the Chaldæans and Indians, and from them over all the Eaſtern Parts of the World: for 'tis no wonder that this Doctrin was gladly and univerſally receiv'd (tho not built among the Heathens on its true Reaſons) ſince it flatter'd Men with the Hopes of what they wiſh above all things whatſoever, namely, to continue their Exiſtence beyond the Grave; there being but few that can bear the very Thoughts of ever ceaſing to live ſomewhere, and moſt People commonly chuſing to be miſerable, rather than not to be at all. This was the State of the Soul's Immortality, among thoſe Nations who were not illuminated by Divine Revelation. The People begun it, from them their Children learnt it, at laſt it became a part of all mens Education (as it happens to Opinions generally receiv'd) and ſo the Learned

Letter II.

Letter II.

themſelves believ'd it before they had a reaſon for it. 'Tis true, the Vulgar, who are not us'd to Reflections, embrac'd it ever afterwards (as they do ſtill) upon Truſt or from Authority: but not ſo with the Philoſophers, who offer'd many probable Arguments for the Soul's ſeparate Exiſtence and eternal Duration. They conceiv'd their own Thoughts or Ideas to be immaterial, and to have nothing in common with Extenſion; they found a Freedom in their Wills, and a ſpontaneous Motion in their Bodys; they obſerv'd a perpetual Contention between their Appetite and their Reaſon; they laid much ſtreſs on their Dreams, and thought that ſometimes awake they had certain Preſages in their Minds of future Dangers; they ſaw that Men had an unquenchable Thirſt after Knowledg, a Proſpect of Futurity, and earneſtly deſir'd a Happineſs that ſhou'd never end: therefore they concluded that all theſe things muſt needs proceed from ſome Being diſtinct from the Body, which was ſelf-moving, and conſequently immortal; ſince every Parcel of Matter is mov'd by ſome external Cauſe, and that what has Motion in it ſelf can never loſe it. The Soul's Immortality was likewiſe great-

ly

ly confirm'd among the Heathens by their Legiſlators, whereof ſeveral did not believe it themſelves; but (obſerving that tho ſome were vertuous by Nature or Temper, and that others were made ſo by the hopes of Reward and Honor, or by the Fear of Puniſhment and Diſgrace) they further adopted this Opinion, as ſuting all mens Circumſtances, perſuading them that in the other Life, the Wicked were ſure to be puniſh'd for their Crimes, tho they might here eſcape the Rigor of the Laws; and that the Good wou'd likewiſe meet there with thoſe Rewards, which might be unjuſtly deny'd to their Merit in the preſent Life. By others this Argument was deem'd to have more of Reaſon than of Politicks in it, and they have labor'd to prove that ſuch a Conduct was neceſſarily becoming the Goodneſs and Equity of a moſt wiſe Being. They had ſeveral Diſputes about the Soul's Præ-exiſtence, Duration, Eſſence, and the Manner and Time of its coming into the Body, its leaving of it, and their Union together. On theſe Subjects there have bin written many ſubtil and ingenious Conjectures, but more that were ridiculous, extravagant, and impoſſible. Nor have the Letter II.

Letter II. modern Philoſophers ſucceeded any better than the Antients, and among both of them ſcarce any two were of a mind; whereas in my opinion the Moderns have not the ſame right to examine this matter as the Antients, but ought humbly to acquieſce in the Authority of our Savior JESUS CHRIST, who brought Life and Immortality to Light.

14. 'TIS no wonder that a Notion, thus grounded among the Heathens, was doubted or deny'd by great numbers of them, even by whole Sects, as the Epicureans for example; and in ſome other Sects the diſtinct Being of it after Death was totally deſtroy'd, they making it then to return to the Soul of the World, and to be ſwallow'd up therein. But in all Sects there never wanted particular Perſons who really oppos'd the Soul's Immortality, tho they might accommodate their ordinary Language to the Belief of the People: for moſt of the Philoſophers (as we read) had two ſorts of Doctrins, the one internal and the other external, or the one private and the other publick; the latter to be indifferently communicated to all the World, and the former only very cautiouſly to their beſt Friends,

or

or to ſome few others capable of receiving it, and that wou'd not make any ill uſe of the ſame. PYTHAGORAS himſelf did not believe the Tranſmigration which has made him ſo famous to Poſterity; for in the internal or ſecret Doctrin he meant no more than the eternal Revolution of Forms in Matter, thoſe ceaſleſs Viciſſitudes and Alterations, which turn every thing into all things, and all things into any thing, as Vegetables and Animals become part of us, we become part of them, and both become parts of a thouſand other things in the Univerſe, Earth turning into Water, Water into Air, Air into Æther, and ſo back again in Mixtures without End or Number. But in the external or popular Doctrin he impos'd on the Mob by an equivocal Expreſſion, that *they ſhou'd become various kinds of Beaſts after Death*, thereby to deter 'em the more effectually from Wickedneſs. Take notice, MADAM, how his intimate Acquaintance and Diſciple TIMÆUS LOCRUS ſpeaks. [1] *If any Perſon*, ſays he, *will continue impenitent and refractory, he ſhall be ſure of Puniſhment both from the Laws, and from*

Letter II.

[1] Ει δε κατις σκλαρος και απειθης, τουτῳ δ' επεσθω κολασις, ἁ τ' εκ των νομων και ἁ εκ των λογων συντονα

Letter II.

from those Doctrins, which denounce celestial and infernal Judgments; as that unhappy Ghosts will meet with implacable Torments, and those other things which the Ionick Poet has deliver'd out of antient Tradition. For as we cure the Bodys of sick Persons with any sort of Remedys, if they refuse the most wholesom; so we keep the Minds of Men in order by false Reasons, if they will not be govern'd by true ones. Wherefore there is a necessity of teaching those foreign Torments: as that there is a Transmigration of the Soul, those of Cowards passing into female Bodys assign'd 'em for a Disgrace; those of Murderers into Beasts of Prey, for a Punishment; those of luxurious Persons, into the Forms of Swine or Goats; those of inconstant and boasting Fellows, into Animals flying in the Air; and those of the Slothful and the

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τονα επαγοισα δειματα τε επωφανια και τα καθ' ἁδεω; ὁτι κολασιες απαραιτητοι αποκεινται δυσδαιμοσι νερτεροις, και τ'αλλα ὁσα επαινεω τον Ιονικον ποιηταν, εκ παλαιας ποιευντα τως εναγεας. Ὡς γαρ τα σωματα νοσωδεσι ποκα ὑγιασομες, εικα μη εικῃ τοις ὑγιεινοτατοις; ὑτω τας ψυχας απειργομες ψευδεσι λογοις, εικα μη αγηται αλαθεσι. Λεγοιντο δ'αναγκαιως και τιμοριαι ξεναι, ὡς μετενδυομεναν ταν ψυχαν, των μεν δειλων ες γυναικεα σκανεα, ποθ' ὑβριν εκδιδομενα; των δε μιαιφονων ες θηριων σωματα, ποτι κολασιν; λαγνων δ'ες συων η καπρων μορφας; κυφων δε και μετεωρων

the Idle, of the Unteachable and the Foolish, into the Shapes of Animals living in the Water. HOMER's Tradition of the Torments of Hell I have prov'd already to have bin from Egypt; and Transmigration is here call'd a foreign Torment, because PYTHAGORAS learnt it of the Egyptian Priests.

15. THO the Poets embellish'd their Pieces with the Opinion of the Soul's Immortality, yet a great number of them (for they were not all of a mind) utterly rejected it, as I might show by their own express words: for SENECA [1] was not single in saying,

Nought's after Death, and Death it self is nought,
Of a quick Race only the utmost Goal;
Then may the Saints lose all their Hopes of Heav'n,
And Sinners quit their racking Fears of Hell.

But

μετεωρων ες πτηνων αερωτορων; αργων δε και απρακτων, αμαθων τε και ανοητων, ες ταν των ενυδρων ιδεαν. In Libri Calce.

[1] Post Mortem nihil est, ipsaque Mors nihil,
Velocis spatii Meta novissima.
Spem ponant avidi, solliciti Metum.

Quæris

Letter II.

But after Death you're curious where to be?
E'en where the Children yet unborn remain.
We're lost in Darkness and devouring Time.
Death wasts the Body, and at last destroys;
Nor spares the Soul. Infernal Depths, and those
Dark Kingdoms of th' inexorable Lord,
With Cerb'rus guarding the well-bolted Gates,
Are only senseless Tales and empty Words,
A Fable like unto a frightful Dream.

The best reason I can find for the Incredulity of the Poets, is the Experience they had of their own Fictions about the future State of the Soul: for scarce

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Quæris quo jaceas post obitum loco?
Quo non nata jacent.
Tempus nos avidum devorat & Chaos.
Mors individua est noxia Corpori,
Nec parcens Animæ. Tænara, & aspero
Regnum sub Domino, Limen & obsidens
Custos non facili Cerberus ostio,
Rumores vacui, verbaque inania,
Et par sollicito Fabula Somnio.
Troad. Act. 2. *Chor.*

one

one of 'em believ'd the charming Descriptions they made of the Elysian Fields, nor their terrible tho elegant Relations of the Torments of the Wicked. VIRGIL, the most accurate and ample Topographer of the infernal Regions, cou'd yet, when he thought of EPICURUS, break out into this Philosophical Rapture : Letter II.

[1] *Happy! who cou'd of things the Causes know,*
Cur'd of all Fears, who cou'd tread under foot
Relentless Fate, and greedy Waves of Hell!

I shou'd never have done if I alledg'd all the Passages where HORACE, JUVENAL, and the rest of them sport with the storys about Hell, and Ghosts, and the like: but CORNELIUS SEVERUS has expreſt the Minds of them all, tho after a more serious manner, in his Poem concerning the burning of Mount Etna.

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[1] Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere Causas,
Atque Metus omnes & inexorabile Fatum
Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari!
Georg. l. 2.

Of

Letter II.

Of all our Errors and Miſtakes of things
The greateſt part proceeds from tragick Scenes.
In Verſe the Poets, not in Viſion, ſaw
Black airy Spirits fleeting under ground,
And PLUTO's *pallid Regions after Death.*
The Poets feign'd the Stygian Waves and Dogs.
Theſe have foul TITYUS *o'er ſev'n Acres ſtretch'd;*
'Tis they, poor TANTALUS, *who thee torment*
With Hunger mercileſs and Thirſt; 'tis they,
O MINOS *and* O EACUS, *who ſing*
Your ſplendid Judgments upon trembling Souls;

'Tis

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[1] Plurima pars Scenæ rerum eſt fallacia: Vates
Sub terris nigros viderunt Carmine Manes,
Atque inter cineres Ditis pallentia Regna.
Mentiti vates Stygias Undaſque, Caneſque.
Hi Tityon ſeptem ſtravere in jugera fœdum;
Sollicitant magna te circum, Tantale, pœna,
Sollicitantque Siti; Minos, tuaque Æace, in umbris
Jura

'Tis they who turn IXION's *reſtleſs Wheel,* Letter II.
And forge all th' other Fables under Earth.
Earth's not enough: they pry about the Gods,
And boldly view that Heaven where they ne'er ſhall come.

You'l think me uncharitable, perhaps, for excluding them by this laſt Line out of Paradiſe: but, beſides that they deſerve no leſs for their Fictions in prejudice of Truth, the Injury's not ſo great; ſince they cannot much fear a Hell of their own making.

16. BUT the Reaſons of thoſe who deny'd the Immortality of the Soul, whether Poets or Philoſophers, are almoſt all comprehended in a narrow Compaſs by PLINY the elder, in the ſeventh Book of his *Natural Hiſtory*. [1] *After the Interment of the Body,* ſays he, *there are various Conjectures about departed*

Jura canunt; idemque rotant Ixionis orbem;
Quicquid & interius falſi ſibi conſcia Terra eſt.
Non eſt Terra ſatis: ſpeculantur Numina Divum,
Nec metuunt oculos alieno admittere Cœlo, &c.

[1] Poſt ſepulturam variæ Manium Ambages. Omnibus a ſuprema die eadem quæ ante primam; nec magis

Letter II.

parted Souls. But the State of all Men is the same after the last Day of their Life, as before the first; nor is there any more Sense in Body or Soul after Death, than before the Day of our Birth. Yet the Vanity of living Men extends to future Ages, and feigns to it self a new Life in the very time of Death: some bestowing Immortality on the Soul; some teaching the Transmigration of the same; others allowing Sense to those in Hell, and worshipping their Ghosts, and making a God of him, who is not at present so much as a Man. As if indeed the manner of breathing in Man differ'd any way from that of all other Animals; or as if there cou'd not be found many things which enjoy a longer Life, to which no body dreams of attributing the like Immortality. But what sort of Body has the separate Soul? Of what Substance? Where

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magis a morte sensus ullus aut Corpori aut Animæ, quam ante Natalem. Eadem enim Vanitas in futurum etiam se prorogat, & in mortis quoque tempore ipsa sibi vitam mentitur: alias Immortalitatem Animæ; alias Transfigurationem; alias sensum Inferis dando, & Manes colendo, Deumque faciendo qui jam etiam Homo esse desierit. Ceu vero ullo modo spirandi ratio Homini a cæteris Animalibus distet; aut non diuturniora multa in vita reperiantur, quibus nemo similem divinat Immortalitatem. Quod autem Corpus Animæ

per

Where reſides its Thinking? How does it ſee? How does it hear? Or by what means does it touch? About what is it buſy'd? Or what Good can there be without theſe things? Where likewiſe is the Manſion thereof? And in ſo many Ages, how vaſt muſt be the multitude of Souls, as well as of Ghoſts! Theſe are Allurements to quiet Children, and the Fictions of Mortals that wou'd live without end. The Vanity of preſerving the Bodys of Men, is like that of the Reſurrection promis'd by DEMOCRITUS, *who did not revive himſelf. But what a prodigious Madneſs is it, to think that Life can be renew'd by Death? Or what Repoſe can Mortals ever enjoy, if the Soul be alive above, and the Ghoſt has Senſe below? In earneſt, this Fondneſs and Credulity deſtroys the Uſefulneſs of* Letter II.

per ſe? Quæ Materia? Ubi Cogitatio illi? Quomodo viſus? Auditus? Aut quî tangit? Qui uſus ejus? Aut quod ſine his Bonum? Quæ deinde Sedes? Quantave multitudo tot ſeculis Animarum, velut Umbrarum! Puerilium iſta Delinimentorum, avidæque nunquam deſinere mortalitatis Commenta ſunt. Similis & de aſſervandis Corporibus Hominum, ac reviviſcendi promiſſa Democrito vanitas, qui non revixit ipſe. Quæ (malum) iſta Dementia eſt, iterari Vitam morte? Quæve Genitis quies unquam, ſi in ſublimi ſenſus Animæ manet inter infernos Umbræ? Perdit profecto iſta Dulcedo

Letter II.

Death, which is the principal Good of Nature; and doubles the Pains of a dying Man, if he happens to be concern'd about his future State: for if it be a pleasure to live, to whom can it be pleasant to have liv'd? But how much easier and more certain is it for every one to believe his own Experience, and to draw an Argument of his Security from the Consideration of what he has bin before he was born? Such are the Reasonings of Men who talk all the while of they know not what, having false Notions of the Origin of the Soul, none at all of its Union with the Body, and but imperfect Guesses about its Essence, which leads 'em consequently to doubt of its separate Existence, and so to deny its Immortality. But, however Men left to themselves may mistake, 'tis impossible that God shou'd lie; and what he has reveal'd, tho not in every thing falling under our Comprehension, must yet be true and absolutely certain. And in

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cedo Credulitasque præcipuum Naturæ bonum, mortem; ac duplicet Obitus, si dolere etiam post-futuri Æstimatione evenit: etenim si dulce vivere est, cui potest esse vixisse? At quanto facilius certiusque sibi quemque credere, ac Specimen securitatis antegenitali sumere experimento? *Cap.* 56.

this

this consists no small Advantage of Believers, that tho they may be equally ignorant with others about the nature of a thing, yet they may have the greatest Conviction of its Existence, and make that use of this Discovery which is beneficial or convenient. Letter II.

17. BUT I exceed my design of a bare Historian; besides that you need no Antidote, SERENA, against the Poison of an abler Adversary than PLINY. I have freely given you my Opinion how the Heathens came by their Notion of the Soul's Immortality, with my Reasons for the same: and if I attribute the Invention of this Doctrin, as well as of Astrology, and most of the other Sciences, to the old Egyptians, 'tis not out of any Partiality to an extinct Nation (tho never so learned, wise, or polite) but led by historical Proofs to a full Persuasion. In treading the Mazes of Antiquity, I am secure from all suspicion of Favor or Fear, of Interest or Revenge. I can't be thought to flatter NECEPSOS, if I shou'd make him pass for the King of Astrologers; and I am come too late into the World to expect any Recompence from SESOSTRIS, who, I think, far exceeds all

Letter II.

the other Heroes and Conquerors of Antiquity. When I undertook to examine this Subject, the Discovery of Truth was the only end I propos'd to my self, besides that of obeying your Commands, which shall be always, MADAM, receiv'd with more Alacrity and Submission, than those of any Monarch in the Universe, by your most oblig'd and devoted Servant.

LETTER

LETTER III.

The Origin of Idolatry, and Reaſons of Heatheniſm.

1. I AM under a double Obligation, MADAM, to impart my Thoughts to you about *the Origin of Idolatry*, both from the Promiſe I made you by word of mouth, and by what I have ſince written to you in the Letter concerning *the Soul's Immortality among the Heathens*. But you are not to expect an account of all the antient Superſtitions, which wou'd require many Volumes, nor of any one Religion whatſoever. I ſhall only endeavour to ſhow by what means the Reaſon of men became ſo deprav'd, as to think of ſubordinate Deitys, how the Worſhip of many Gods was firſt

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introduc'd into the world, and what induc'd Men to pay Divine Honors to their Fellow-Creatures, whether on Earth or in the Heavens: then I ſhall explain the Fables of the Heathens by general and certain Principles, giving the occaſion of their Temples, Prieſts, and Altars; of their Images and Statues; their Oracles, Sacrifices, Feaſts, Expiations, Judiciary Aſtrology, Ghoſts, and Spectters; of the tutelary Powers of ſeveral Countrys; of Peoples thinking that Heaven is over us, that Hell is under us, and ſuch other things as commonly occur in the Greek and Roman Authors. Tho with very ſmall pains I could manifeſtly prove that in Egypt [1] *Men had firſt, long before others, arriv'd at the various beginnings of Religions* (as AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS ſpeaks) *and that they preſerv'd the firſt occaſions of Sacred Rites conceal'd in their ſecret Writings*; yet I ſhall not trouble you with repeating the Arguments I have already produc'd to this purpoſe in *the Hiſtory of the Soul's Im-*

[1] Hic primum Homines, longe ante alios, ad varia Religionum incunabula (ut dicitur) pervenerunt; & initia prima Sacrorum caute tuentur condita Scriptis arcanis. *Lib.* 22.

mortality,

mortality, from the Authority of HERODOTUS, DIODORUS SICULUS, LUCIAN, DION CASSIUS, MACROBIUS, and others: nor will I urge that, by Examples and Laws from the Pentateuch, it clearly appears that Magick, the Interpretation of Dreams, Aſtrology, and Necromancy, were long us'd in Egypt before they were known in Chaldæa or any other place. Letter III.

2. THE moſt antient Egyptians, Perſians, and Romans, the firſt Patriarchs of the Hebrews, with ſeveral other Nations and Sects, had no ſacred Images or Statues, no peculiar Places or coſtly Faſhions of Worſhip; the plain Eaſineſs of their Religion being moſt agreeable to the Simplicity of the Divine Nature, as indifference of Place or Time were the beſt Expreſſions of infinite Power and Omnipreſence. But tho *God did thus make Men upright, yet they found out* (ſays the wiſeſt King of Iſrael) *many Inventions*. And certainly when once a Man ſuffers himſelf to be led into precarious or arbitrary Practices, he cannot ſtop for any Reaſon, but what, if it be good, muſt conclude with equal Force againſt all. I believe I Eccl. 7. 29.

Letter III. may without much difficulty prove, that ſuch as firſt entertain'd Deſigns againſt the Liberty of Mankind, were alſo the firſt Depravers of their Reaſon. For none, in his right ſenſes, can ever be perſuaded voluntarily to part with his Freedom; and he that makes uſe of Force to deprive him of it, muſt have brib'd or deluded very many beforehand to ſupport his unjuſt Pretenſions, by which acceſſion of ſtrength he cou'd ſeduce, frighten, or ſubdue others. It will not therefore appear unlikely that Men very early learnt to have the ſame Conceptions of God himſelf, which they had before of their earthly Princes: and after thus fancying him mutable, jealous, revengeful, and arbitrary, they next endeavour'd to procure his Favor much after the ſame manner that they made their court to thoſe who pretended to be his Repreſentatives or Lieutenants, nay to be Gods themſelves, or to be deſcended of heavenly Parentage, as the antient Monarchs us'd to do.

3. IT ſeems evident from the remoteſt Monuments of Learning, that all Superſtition originally related to the Worſhip of the Dead, being principally deriv'd

deriv'd from Funeral Rites, tho the first occaſion might be very innocent or laudable, and was no other than Orations wherein they were ſometimes perſonally addreſt (ſuch as the Panegyricks of the Egyptians) or Statues dedicated with many Ceremonys to their Memory. But the Flatterers of great Men in the Perſons of their Predeceſſors, the exceſſive Affection of Friends or Relations, and the Advantage which the Heathen Prieſts drew from the Credulity of the ſimple, carry'd this matter a great deal further. Not only Kings and Queens, great Generals and Legiſlators, the Patrons of Learning, Promoters of curious Arts, and Authors of uſeful Inventions, partook of this Honor; but alſo ſuch private Perſons, as by their virtuous Actions had diſtinguiſh'd themſelves from others, were often conſecrated to pious and eternal Memory by their Country or their Kindred, as reputable to the Dead, and exemplary to the Living. This is the true reaſon (as we ſhall ſhew in its proper place) of all Nations having their proper [1] tutelary Gods; and hence Letter III.

[1] Divi Indigetes.

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are deriv'd the peculiar Religions of [1] particular Familys. PLINY, [2] in the ſecond Book of his *Natural Hiſtory*, ſays, That *the moſt antient way of Mens paying their Acknowledgments to their Benefactors, was by deifying of them after their Deceaſe* (which was affirm'd by [3] CICERO with ſeveral others before him) *and that the ſeveral Appellations of the Gods and of the Stars are deriv'd from the meritorious Actions of Men.* The firſt Idolatry therefore did not proceed (as 'tis commonly ſuppos'd) from the Beauty, or Order, or Influence of the Stars: but Men, as I told you in *the Hiſtory of the Soul's Immortality*, obſerving Books to periſh by Fire, Worms, or Rottenneſs; and Iron, Braſs, or Marble not leſs ſubject to violent Hands or the Injurys of the Weather, they impos'd on the Stars (as the only

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[1] Sacra Gentilitia.

[2] Hic eſt vetuſtiſſimus referendi bene merentibus Gratiam mos, ut tales Numinibus adſcribant: quippe & omnium aliorum nomina Deorum, & quæ ſupra retuli Syderum, ex hominum nata ſunt meritis.

[3] Suſcepit autem vita Hominum conſuetudoque communis, ut beneficiis excellentes viros in Cœlum fama ac voluntate tollerent; hinc Hercules, hinc Caſtor & Pollux, &c. *De Nat. Deor. l.* 2.

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everlaſting Monuments) the proper Names of their Heroes, or of ſomething memorable in their Hiſtory. ERATOSTHENES the Cyrenean, a very antient Philoſopher of prodigious Knowledg in all the Sciences, wrote a Book (yet extant) *of the Conſtellations*, wherein he delivers the Reaſons of their Names, which are perpetual Alluſions to antient Hiſtory, tho wonderfully diſguiz'd by Time, and for the moſt part mere Fables. The moſt learned Monſieur LE CLERC, when he wrote an Extract of ERATOSTHENES, among ſome other Mythological Tracts in the eighth Volume of *the Univerſal and Hiſtorical Library*, made the following Epigram.

[1] *Antiquity, b'ing ſure that Nature's Force*
Wou'd Braſs and Marble Monuments conſume,
Did wiſely its own Hiſtory tranſmit
To future Times by Heav'ns eternal Fires.

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[1] Tempore, cum lapidum ſciret monumenta vetuſtas,
Atque perire ſuo cuncta metalla ſitu;
Cauta, ſuam, ætates ferrur docuiſſe futuras
Cælorum æternis ignibus, Hiſtoriam.

In

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In other places he declares himſelf to be of the ſame opinion concerning the Appellations of the Stars, and in that very Journal explains ſome Fables upon this Principle. As divers Nations learnt this Cuſtom one of another, ſo they accordingly chang'd their Spheres, each impoſing on the heavenly Bodys the Names and Actions belonging to their own Country. This is manifeſt in the Spheres of the Greeks and Barbarians, and for this reaſon the Cretans maintain'd [1] that *moſt of the Gods were born among them, being Men, who, for their Benefits to the Publick, had obtain'd immortal Honors:* for they believ'd the Grecian Gods to be thoſe of all Mankind, and knew not that in other places this way of naming the Conſtellations and deifying deſerving Men, was long in uſe before they had practis'd it. Nor was there wanting one among the Chriſtians, who, approving this Method, endeavour'd to aboliſh thoſe

[1] Των θεων δε τους πλειστους μυθολογουσι παρ' ἑαυτοις γεγονεναι, τους δια τας κοινας ευεργεσιας τυχοντας αθανατων τιμων. Diod. Sic. l. 5.

Heathen

Heathen Names, as not underſtood, or of no concern to us; and to impoſe on the Stars new Names in their ſtead, containing the Hiſtory of the Old and New Teſtament. But ſince he cou'd not prevail with the Aſtronomers, let's not digreſs. At laſt ſuch as were ignorant or aſham'd of the true Reaſons of theſe things, wou'd juſtify their Worſhip (tho, as I ſhall evince, by weak Arguments) from the endleſs and orderly Revolution, the admirable Luſtre, and general Uſefulneſs of the Sun, Moon, and other Planets and Stars. This did likewiſe give the Philoſophers a handle to explain the Motions of the Planets by certain Intelligences fixt and inhabiting in their Orbs, which they perpetually guided in their Courſes; and hence the Bodys of the Sun and Moon are painted like a Face with Eyes, Noſe, and a Mouth. Letter III.

4. THE Opinion of the twelve greater Gods proceeded from certain Hiſtorys affix'd to the twelve Signs of the Zodiack, as the ſeven Planets bear the Names of as many Perſons, to whom were alſo conſecrated the Days of the Week, but reputed more or leſs holy,

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holy, lucky or fortunate, according to the Temper and Dignity of these Gods: so that the Egyptian Division of Time into Months and Weeks, and the storys they wou'd perpetuate by the Stars, gave a Rise to the most eminent Gods of the Heathens. From hence very naturally Judiciary Astrology had its beginning: for the People, as you'l see lower, believing those Gods to correspond with their Priests, who they thought might as well foretel any other Secret as they did Eclipses, consulted them about all they dreaded or wish'd. The fluctuating of mens Minds between Hope and Fear, is one of the chief Causes of Superstition: for being no way able to foresee the Event of what greatly concerns them, they now hope the best, and the next minute fear the worst, which easily leads them not only to take any thing for a good or bad Omen, which happen'd to them in any former good luck or misfortune; but also to lay hold of any Advice, to consult Diviners and Astrologers. 'Tis just after the same manner with sick Persons, who frequently prefer a Conjurer to the best Doctor, and a ridiculous Charm to the most excellent Remedy.

medy. [1] *Magick it ſelf* (in the worſt ſenſe) *had its undoubted Original from Phyſick*, as PLINY ſays, *pretending to afford better Remedys, to be nobler and more divine: to its flattering and moſt alluring Promiſes were added the joint Forces of Religion* (*to which Mankind is always extremely obnoxious*) *and of Mathematical Arts* (meaning Aſtrology) *every body being deſirous to know what regards him for the future, and believing that the Truth of theſe Things may be certainly learnt from Heaven. Thus captivating Mens Underſtandings by this triple Ty, it increas'd to ſuch a prodigious pitch*, &c. Over and above the Impreſſions of Religion in barbarous Words and Charms; and of Aſtrology, in the Influence and Intelligence of the Stars, the Magicians wou'd appear not to act Letter III.

[1] Natam primum e Medicina nemo dubitat, ac ſpecie ſalutari irrepſiſſe velut altiorem ſanctioremque quam Medicinam: ita blandiſſimis deſideratiſſimiſque promiſſis addidiſſe vires Religionis, ad quas maxime etiamnum caligat humanum genus: atque ut hoc quoque ſuggeſſerit miſcuiſſe Artes mathematicas, nullo non avido futura de ſeſe ſciendi, atque ea e Cælo veriſſime peti credente. Ita, poſſeſſis hominum ſenſibus tripli-ci nodo, in tantum Faſtigium adoleviť, &c. *Nat. Hiſt. lib.* 30.

without

Letter III. without rational Grounds, by the occult phyſical Virtues of certain Herbs, Stones, Minerals, and other Things extremely difficult to be procur'd, and only known to themſelves. I have already prov'd in my laſt Letter, that the Egyptians were the Inventers of Aſtrology; and tho CICERO, the Diſciple of the Greeks, inclines to attribute it rather to the Chaldeans of Aſſyria, yet it's worth your while to hear how cautiouſly this wiſe Man has expreſt himſelf. *The Chaldeans,* [1] ſays he, *not thoſe ſo call'd from their Profeſſion but from their Nation, by a conſtant Obſervation of the Stars are thought to have fram'd a Science, whereby it may be foretold to every Perſon what may happen to him, and to what Condition he is born. The Egyptians likewiſe, from the Antiquity of Times, are believ'd to have had the ſame Art for innumerable Ages.*

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[1] Chaldæi, non ex Artis ſed ex Gentis vocabulo nominati, diuturna Obſervatione Syderum Scientiam putantur effeciſſe, ut prædici poſſet quid cuique eventurum, & quo quiſque Fato natus eſſet. Eandem Artem etiam Egyptii longinquitate temporum innumerabilibus pene ſæculis conſequati putantur. *De Divinat. lib.* 1.

5. SINCE

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5. SINCE thus I have accounted for Magick and judiciary Aſtrology, I ſhall, before I go any further, add a word or two about Peoples looking up when they pray, believing Heaven to be over their Heads, and Hell under their Feet. I ſhall likewiſe produce the occaſional Cauſes of Ghoſts and Spectters: for all thoſe Things came from the ſame common Root with the Origin of Idolatry, that is, from the Rites of the Antients about dead Bodys. In the Letter about *the Immortality of the Soul among the Heathens*, I explain'd to you by what Degrees the People came to be perſuaded that there were Perſons living in the Stars; and here I'll ſhow you how they arriv'd to the ſupreme Dignity of Godſhip: from which you'l eaſily perceive that this introduc'd the Cuſtom of Mens lifting up their Eyes, and extending their Hands to Heaven when they pray, directing themſelves to the Gods whom they beheld above them. From the ſame Funeral Rites they believ'd Hell to be under them, and to be the Manſion of the Good and the Bad, tho diſtinguiſh'd in their Places

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and Conditions; becauſe all ſorts of Men were equally bury'd, and only a ſmaller number deify'd, whom they thought to be above: whereas in the Univerſe, properly ſpeaking, there is in reality neither Above nor Below, Right nor Left, Eaſt, Weſt, North, or South, theſe being only abſtracted Notions, denoting the Relations of particular Bodys to one another, and their ſeveral Situations in reſpect of us. The Fancy of Ghoſts and Spectters proceeded in like manner from the Egyptian Mummys, theſe being ſo long kept intire, not only in the Grots near Memphis, but alſo by many People in fine Apartments at home, and which (whether preſerving their Lineaments freſh, or becoming ghaſtly with Time) cou'd naturally make frightful Impreſſions on Children, Strangers, and the ignorant Vulgar. Tho Humation, or the placing of the intire Corps under Ground, was the moſt antient and univerſal manner of Burial, and that the Athenians are acknowledg'd to have learn'd it of the Egyptians, yet you know the Romans were accuſtom'd to burn their dead Bodys; and nevertheleſs, as CICERO judiciouſly remarks, they

they were nothing cur'd thereby of their Notions concerning Ghoſts and Spectters, Humation having bin likewiſe their firſt Method of Burial. *And ſo prevalent was Error,* [1] ſays he, *that tho they knew the Bodys were burnt, yet they feign'd ſuch things to be tranſacted in the infernal Places, which without Bodys can neither be done nor underſtood: For as they cou'd not frame any Notion in their Minds of Souls living in a ſeparate State, ſo they ſought out ſome Form or Figure. Thence proceeded all* HOMER's *Divination by the Dead; thence thoſe necromantick Rites which my Friend* APPIUS *us'd to perform; thence in our Neighbourhood the Lake of* Avernus,

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Whence Ghoſts are nightly rais'd, and
Gates of deepeſt Hell

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[1] Tantumque valuit Error—ut corpora cremata cum ſcirent, tamen ea fieri apud inferos fingerent, quæ ſine corporibus nec fieri poſſent nec intelligi. Animos enim per ſeipſos viventes non poterant mente complecti, Formam aliquam Figuramque quærebant. Inde Homeri tota Νεκυια: inde ea quæ meus amicus Appius Νεκρομαντια faciebat: inde in Vicinia noſtra Averni Lacus,

Unde Animæ excitantur obſcura umbra, aperto oſtio
Alti Acherontis, falſo ſanguine imagines mortuorum.

Tuſc. Quæſt. l. 1.

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Open to falſe Bodys, Images of the Dead.

6. THUS you ſee, MADAM, how they took care to people Hell; and the truth is, that the very Heaven of the Gentiles was wholly inhabited by Colonys from our Earth. CICERO in his firſt [1] *Tuſculan Diſputation*, boldly ſays, *Is not all Heaven full of human Race? If I ſhou'd be at the pains of ſearching among the Antients, and particularly the Greek Writers, thoſe, who are accounted the principal Gods, will be found to have remov'd from among us into Heaven. Ask whoſe are the Sepulchers they ſhow in Greece. Remember, ſeeing you are initiated, what is told at the Celebration of the Myſterys; and then you'll underſtand how very far this Buſineſs reaches.*

[1] Totum pene Cœlum nonne humano Genere completum eſt? Si vero ſcrutari vetera, & ex his ea quæ Scriptores Græci prodiderunt eruere coner; ipſi illi, majores gentium Dii qui habentur, hinc a nobis profecti in Cœlum reperientur. Quære quorum demonſtrantur ſepulchra in Græcia. Reminiſcere, quoniam es initiatus, quæ traduntur Myſteriis; tum denique quam hoc late pateat intelliges.

Nor

Nor was it at the Eleuſinian Myſterys only that ſuch Diſcoverys were made, for thoſe of the Egyptians adumbrated the Death of their deify'd King OSIRIS and his Queen ISIS; to ſpeak nothing of the Syrian Rites in Honor of ADONIS and other Deitys, which King DAVID moſt properly calls *the Sacrifices of the Dead.* It is as true of all the Myſterys in general, what CICERO ſays in another place of thoſe of Eleuſis, Samothracia, and Lemnos, [1] *That being explain'd, and reduc'd to the Examination of Reaſon, the Nature of Things is better known than that of the Gods.* EUHEMERUS, an old Sicilian Poet and Philoſopher, wrote the Hiſtory of SATURN, JUPITER, and the reſt of that ſort, deſcribing the Birth, Country, Actions, and Buryal-place of each; and, as PLUTARCH words it, [2] *He humaniz'd the Gods*, not transforming but reducing them to Men, ſuch as they [3] truly were before. But, not con-

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Pſal. 106. 28.

[1] Quibus explicatis, ad rationemque revocatis, rerum magis natura cognoſcitur quam Deorum. *De Nat. Deor. lib.* I.

[2] Ἐξανθρωπιζει τα θεια.

[3] Ab Euhemero autem & Mortes & Sepulturæ demonſtrantur Deorum. *Cic. de Nat. Deor. l.* 1.

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[1] *The ſame Delight they took alive in Arms,*
To courſe in Chariots, or breed ſtately Horſes,
With equal Care imploys their Ghoſts below.

So HESIOD, very pertinently to our purpoſe, repreſents the happy Inhabitants of the Golden Age like the moſt antient Princes, injoying their former Power above, and as being the Diſtributers of Riches and Honors here on Earth.

[2] *Theſe by great* JOVE's *Decree now Dæmons are,*

Ce-

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[1] ——Quæ gratia curruum,
Armorumque fuit vivis, quæ cura nitentes
Paſcere equos, eadem ſequitur tellure repoſtos.
Æn. l. 6.

[2] Τοι μεν Δαιμονες εισι Διος μεγαλε δια βυλας,
Εσθλοι,

Celeſtial, Good, Guardians of mortal Men, Letter III.
Obſerving all their juſt or wicked Deeds,
B'ing cloth'd with Air, and wandring o'er the Earth,
They Wealth and Honors to their Fav'rites give;
For ſtill their kingly Office they retain.

From the ſame Spring the old Ethiopians, as we learn from STRABO, [a] *believ'd their Benefactors and Perſons of royal Extract to be Gods*, and, no doubt, to benefit and protect them ſtill from above, as they formerly us'd to do below.

7. I DON'T pretend, MADAM, that theſe falſe Notions of the Heathens about the Dead were the only Riſe of Idolatry; but I maintain it was the firſt, the

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Εθλοι, επιχθονιοι, φυλακες θνητων ανθρωπων,
Οι ῥα φυλασσουσιν τε δικας και σχετλια εργα,
Ηερα εσσαμενοι, παντη φοιτωντες επ' αιαν,
Πλουτοδοται; και τοδε γερας βασιληιον εσχον.
Oper. & Dies.

[a] Ὡς δε επι το πολυ ους Ευεργετας και βασιλικους θεους νομισουσι. Lib. 17.

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[1] Multæ autem aliæ naturæ Deorum ex magnis Beneficiis eorum, non ſine cauſa, & a Græciæ ſapientiſſimis & majoribus noſtris conſtitutæ nominatæque ſunt: quicquid enim magnam utilitatem generi afferret humano, id non ſine divina Bonitate erga Homines fieri arbitrabantur. *De Nat. Deor. l.* 2.

[2] Tum autem res ipſa in qua vis ineſt major aliqua ſic

ſo term'd by them, that even this very Worth is call'd a God, as Fidelity, the Mind, &c. And ſo Virtue, Honor, Safety, Concord, Chaſtity, Liberty, Victory, Clemency, Piety, and ſuch like, were deify'd; *in all which things*, adds he, [t] *becauſe there was ſo great a Worth that it could not be manag'd without God, the Thing it ſelf has obtain'd the name of a God, of which kind the words Cupid and Deſire, Venus and Love, are conſecrated.* Without queſtion, when wiſe and good Men perceiv'd that the People wou'd needs have a plurality of Gods, and Temples dedicated to them, they, to comply with their Weakneſs, and at the ſame time to bring 'em as much as they cou'd to better and nobler Thoughts, deify'd ſuch Things. Hence may be perceiv'd how ſo many Things came to be deify'd, which have no perſonal Form or Exiſtence, and are nothing elſe but mere

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ſic appellatur, ut ea ipſa vis nominetur Deus, ut Fides, ut Mens, &c. *Ibid.*

[t] Quarum omnium rerum quia vis erat tanta ut ſine Deo regi non poſſet, ipſa res Deorum nomen obtinuit, quo ex genere Cupidinis & Voluntatis, & lubentinæ Veneris vocabula conſecrata ſunt. *Ibid.*

Propertys,

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Propertys, Modes, or Accidents. This made CICERO appoint in his Laws (a matter practis'd in Rome before) that thoſe things ſhou'd be reputed Gods, [1] *for the ſake of which Man was admitted to aſcend into Heaven.*—— *'Tis well done,* ſays he, *that the Mind, Piety, Virtue, Faith, are conſecrated, of all which the Temples are publickly dedicated at Rome; that thoſe who have them (and all good Men have them) may think that the Gods themſelves are plac'd in their Minds.*

8. BUT as the Superſtitious pervert every thing in Heaven and Earth, ſo they fail'd not to do in this caſe, conſecrating the moſt vitious and abominable things, for which our Author juſtly reprehends them. The Athenians were bleſs'd with a couple of fine Goddeſſes, Contumely and Impudence; the Romans had Fear and Hope, Paleneſs

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[1] Propter quæ datur homini aſcenſus in Cœlum.—— Bene vero quod Mens, Pietas, Virtus, Fides, conſecrantur manu, quarum omnium Romæ dedicata publice Templa ſunt: ut illa qui habeant (habent autem omnes boni) Deos ipſos in Animis ſuis collocatos putent. *De Leg. l.* 2.

and

and Trembling. The deſtructive Fever had an Altar; and there was an endleſs rabble of Gods preſiding over the fouleſt Diſtempers, and even over Actions very barbarous and obſcene. The Egyptians, beſides the Worſhip of the celeſtial Gods, or of the Stars and Planets, had withal a ſymbolical Worſhip on Earth, attributing Divine Virtues and paying a religious Reſpect to almoſt all ſorts of Animals and Plants, not excepting the moſt vile and contemptible. Yet all parts of Egypt did not reverence the ſame Species. The Reaſons they alledg'd in their own Juſtification, were either the Uſefulneſs of theſe things, or that the ſeveral Deitys manifeſted their particular Powers more in one Species than in another, or they pretended to ſome Allegory drawn from Morality or Natural Philoſophy. [1] *In their Sacred Rites,* ſays PLUTARCH, *there's nothing appointed that's unreaſonable (as ſome imagine) or fabulous, or from Superſtition; but ſome things* Letter III.

[1] Ουδεν αλογον, ουδε μυθωδες, ουδε υπο Δεισιδαιμονιας (ωσπερ ενιοι νομισουσιν) εγκαλεσοι χειλο ιερουργιαις: αλλα

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things having moral and useful Causes, and others not being void of some historical or philosophical Elegance. Agreeable to which CICERO says, that *the very Egyptians,* [1] *who are so much laught at, have not consecrated any Beast, but for some Advantage that they drew from it.* This symbolical Theology made several learned Men believe that all the other parts of the Heathen Religions might and ought to be so explain'd, which I shall prove to be a great mistake before I have done. The Egyptians indeed carry'd it farther than all others: for they did not only worship the Bird Ibis, Hawks, Cats, Dogs, Crocodiles, Sea-horses, Goats, Bulls, Cows, Onions, Garlick, and what not? but [2] *they worshipt a Man in the Town of Anubis, in which they sacrific'd to him, and burnt the sacred stuff on the Altars.*

αλλα τα μεν ηθικας εχοντα και χρειωδεις αιτιας, τα δε ουκ αμοιρα κομψοτητος ἱστορικης η φυσικης εστιν. De Iside & Osiride.

[1] Ipsi illi, qui irridentur, Ægyptii, nullam Belluam, nisi ob aliquam utilitatem quam ex ea caperent, consecraverunt. *De Nat. Deor. l.* 1.

[2] Ανθρωπον σεβουσιν κατα Ανουβιν κωμην, εν ᾗ και τουτῳ θυεται, και επι των βωμων τα ἱερεια καεται. De Abstin. l. 4.

They

They are the words of PORPHYRY. Letter III.

9. IN other Countrys ſome paid a philoſophical Worſhip to the four Elements, and certain parts of the human Body. Other Citys as well as that of Rome were elevated to the high Dignity of Goddeſſes. And many for fear of offending by miſtake erected Altars to [1] unknown Gods. The Romans frankly naturaliz'd thoſe of all other Nations, falling down before ſuch Deitys as cou'd not protect their antient Votarys from the Power of their Arms: yet this was rather a politick Liberty of Conſcience, than the Effects of any real Devotion. Now from all this it is very evident, not only that the Gods did infinitely exceed Mankind in number as well as in dignity; but that, tho Superſtition cou'd be kept within no bounds, yet all Idolatry had its Original from mens Notions and Actions about dead Bodys. But no Abſurdity ſeems greater to me than to find Divinity attributed to Chance, which is directly

[1] Diog. Laert. in Epimenide. Pauſan. in Attic. & Lucian. in Philopat.

oppoſite

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oppoſite to all Order, Intelligence, and Deſign: and, nevertheleſs, under the name of Fortune it had its proper Temples, one dedicated to good, and another to bad Fortune; at the ſame time receiving Divine Worſhip, and the moſt opprobrious Epithets of blind, various, inconſtant, true to the worſt, and a jilt to the beſt. Theſe things, as in the Sequel will appear, were introduc'd and invented at ſecond hand; but all occaſion'd and grounded on the Worſhip of the Dead.

10. I AM far from deſigning to bring all the Arguments I cou'd to demonſtrate my Opinion about *the Origin of Idolatry*, yet I cannot forbear producing one Example, which ſhows the utmoſt Extravagance of human Nature. Tho the generality of Chriſtians have almoſt made a Martyr of SOCRATES as dying for the Belief of one God, and that the Heathens will have his guilt to have bin for introducing other Gods than the State allow'd, yet both theſe Aſſertions are falſe: for to his death he adher'd to the Worſhip of his Country, being of opinion that no private Perſon ought to ſeparate

ſeparate from the publick Eſtabliſh- Letter
ment; and tho he might believe but III.
one God, yet this was none of the
Crimes objected to him by his Accuſers
or his Judges. However, conſidering
the Sentiments of all Men about him,
it ſeems ſcarce credible that this Father
of good Manners, this Prince of Philo-
ſophers, and ableſt Phyſician of the
Mind, ſhou'd have divine Honors paid
to himſelf after his death, that he ſhou'd
have a Temple and a Fountain dedi-
cated to his Name. We read, it's true,
that the Athenians, repenting of their
injuſt Sentence, and to acknowledg his
exemplary worth, erected a Statue to
perpetuate his Memory: and we know
(what is very natural) that his Admirers
celebrated his Birth-day, and wore the Fi-
gure of his Head about them on Gems in
their Rings or Seals. But this Veneration
at laſt was carry'd to religious Worſhip.
For MARINUS, the Diſciple and
Succeſſor of PROCLUS at Athens,
who wrote his Maſter's Life, and who
ſpeaks of a thing he knew as well as I
do to what Saint my Pariſh-Church is
dedicated: MARINUS, I ſay, rela-
ting the happy Preſages of PROCLUS's
ſucceeding in the Platonick School, ſays,
that

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that [1] *as he arriv'd at the Piræum,* NICOLAS, *who afterwards grew famous in the Art of Declamation, but ſtudy'd then under the Profeſſors at Athens, went down to the Port as to one of his Acquaintance, to receive and lodg him as his Countryman; for* NICOLAS *was likewiſe a Lycian, and ſo he conducted him into the City. But* (PROCLUS) *finding himſelf weary after his Voyage, ſat down by the way in the Chappel of* SOCRATES *(when as yet he neither knew nor had heard that* SOCRATES *was honor'd in any place thereabouts) and pray'd* NICOLAS *that he wou'd likewiſe ſit down a little, and, if he cou'd any where, to help him to ſome Water. The other obeying him, order'd ſome to be brought*

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[1] Ὡς γαρ εις τον πειραια καληρε, Νικολαος, ὁ υστερον μεν περιφανης επι τη σοφιστικη γενομενος, τηνικαυτα δε σχολαζων τοις εν Αθηναις Διδασκαλοις, καλεςη εις τον Λιμενα, ὡς προς γνωριμον, ὑποδεξαμενος τε αυτον και ξεναγησων ὡς πολιτην. Λυκιος γαρ και ὁ Νικολαος. Ηγεν ων αυτον επι την πολιν. Ὁ δε εκ του βαδιζειν κοπου ηδεως καλα την Ὁδον, και ωδει το Σωκρατειον, ουπω ειδως ουδε ακριβως ὁτι Σωκρατους αυτου τυγχανοι τιμαι; ηξιου δε τον Νικολαον επιμενειν τε αυτοθι ὀλιγον, και καθεζεσθαι, αμα δε και ει εχοι ποθεν ὑδωρ αυτῳ προισασθαι: και γαρ δη και πολλω, ὡς ελεγεν, καλειχετο. Ὁ δε ἑτοιμος αυτῳ, και τυτο εκ αλλαχοθεν ποθεν,

εξ

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brought immediately, and that from no other place, but from that same consecrated Ground: for the Fountain of SOCRATES's *Statue was not far from thence. Now, as he was drinking,* NICOLAS, *who thought of it only just then, said to him, this is a good Omen that you have sat in the Temple of* SOCRATES, *and that there you drunk the first Attic Water. Then* PROCLUS, *rising up and worshipping, proceeded on his way to the City.* Here you have an Example in all Forms how the Veneration of dead Men becomes excessive in time; and I have chosen to relate it thus at length, because it was most unlikely to happen to SOCRATES, tho more deserving it than any other.

11. I SHOU'D never have done, SERENA, if I wou'd confirm my Opinion by all the Authoritys I cou'd

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εξ αυτȣ δε εκεινȣ τȣ ἱερȣ χωριȣ εποιει φερησθαι; ȣδε γαρ πορρῳ ην ἡ πηγη της Σοκρατȣς στηλης. Πιοντι δε αυτῳ συμβολον ὁ Νικολαος, τοτε πρωτον επιστησας, ειπεν, ὡς τῳ Σοκρατειῳ ειη ενιδρυθεις, και πρωτον εκειθεν Αττικον ὑδωρ πιως. Ὁ δε, εξαναστας και προσκυνησας, επι την πολιν επορευετο. Marin. in vita Procli, Cap. 10. Edit. Lond.

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produce. Whoever is converſant in the Learning of the Antients, and conſiders the Accounts they have left us of their own Original as well as that of other Nations, what they have particularly written of their Gods, and the Reaſons of their Deification, can have no doubts remaining concerning this matter. But 'tis obſervable, that according to the degrees of Improvement any Nation made in Politeneſs, Literature, or Government, the leſs they were addicted to this impious Humor of God-making. To give an Inſtance hereof, the Romans deify'd ROMULUS their firſt King and Founder; but, during thoſe many hundred Years their Commonwealth ſubſiſted, they did not conſecrate one Mortal, tho for Virtue, Knowledg, and Valor, they were furniſh'd with more deſerving Examples than all the World beſides. And yet as ſoon as ever their free Republick was turn'd into abſolute Monarchy, the greateſt part of the firſt Emperors were deify'd; both JULIUS CÆSAR the Subverter of their Liberty, and the moſt cruel, leud, or fooliſh of the ſucceeding Tyrants, with ſome of their Wives, Relations, and Favorites; imitating

imitating herein the Cuſtom of Kings among the Barbarians, who by ſuch Artifices kept their Subjects in perpetual Slavery, as not daring to rebel againſt the Gods, or thoſe that were in Election to become ſuch. There's nothing better known in Hiſtory, than that Princes had Divine Honors paid 'em after Death by the Egyptians, Aſſyrians, the moſt antient Greeks, and other Nations. Their Queens alſo, their Brothers, Siſters, and other Kindred, were made Gods and Goddeſſes; and it was always the Intereſt of the ſucceeding Monarch, to keep up this extraordinary Notion of his Race. Nay Divine Worſhip was offer'd to many others during their Lives, as well as to AUGUSTUS. PLUTARCH, to whom I might add ſeveral more Authors, relates that ARTABANUS, a Perſian Lord, ſaid to THEMISTOCLES, then a Fugitive in that Court, [1] *Of the many and good Laws which we have, this is the moſt excellent, to honor*

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[1] Ἡμῖν δὲ πολλῶν νομίων καὶ καλῶν ὄντων κάλλιστος ἔθος ἐστὶ, τὸ τιμᾶν βασιλέα, καὶ σέβεσθαι εἰκόνα θεῶν. In Themiſtocle.

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the King, and to worſhip the Image of God. No body is ignorant how ſacred the Ottoman Race is eſteem'd; tho this, as we ſee, cannot always preſerve 'em from the Fury of their inſolent Guards or of their injur'd Subjects. The Divine Right claim'd of late by ſome Chriſtian Kings, and the unreſerv'd and paſſive Obedience pretended by their flattering Clergy to be due to them, if not a better Expedient to ſupport Tyranny than that of the Heathens, yet they were unqueſtionably intended for the ſame end and purpoſe. But the wiſer Men grew, the leſs they believ'd of theſe things; on the contrary the more narrowly they watch'd their Princes, the more jealous they became of their Liberty and Privileges. Religion and Reaſon are hated Obſtacles to Superſtition and Error; and CICERO remarks that ſome Oracles ceas'd to give Reſponſes in his time, becauſe People were grown leſs credulous.

12. HAVING hitherto explain'd and eſtabliſh'd the Origin of Idolatry, I ſhall now, MADAM, conformably to theſe Principles, aſſign the Reaſons of

of the Heathen Rites, if you'l allow any Reaſon to be given for Practices in many caſes very abſurd and extravagant. Men thinking to pleaſe their God (whoever he was among ſo many) as they were wont to do while a Prince on Earth, erected magnificent Temples or Palaces, and on ſumptuous Tables or Altars they made Feaſts or Sacrifices to him; imagining that he and his Court (principally compos'd of their deceas'd Heroes) did feed on the Blood and Fumes of ſlaughter'd Animals, and delight their celeſtial Noſtrils with ſnuffing up the Fragrancy of Incenſe, as they did their ſacred Eyes with Pomp and Shows. All the Attendance was ſutable to their State and Dignity when living. Solemn Times or Holy-days were ſet apart from ordinary Labor for the Celebration of the Feaſt; and thoſe, whom afterwards they call'd their Prieſts (whoſe buſineſs was to order the Feaſt, to ſerve the Company, and to repeat a Panegyrick in Commemoration of the deify'd Mortal) were clad in ſplendid Garments, and endow'd with ſeveral commodious Privileges, as the Servants of Princes always are: but the chiefeſt at the be- Letter III.

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ginning were an Exemption from every other Duty to the Publick, and plentiful Salarys aſſign'd for their Livelihood. There was likewiſe at theſe Feaſts, good ſtore of Muſick, Dancing, Perfuming, Illuminations, Bowings, Cringings, Proſtrations, and every thing beſides that is uſually imploy'd to gratify the Senſes of the moſt vain or licentious Prince; but cou'd never be thought acceptable to any Divine Being, without placing the Origin of Idolatry in the Worſhip of the Dead, which makes ſuch Worſhip and Ceremonys very accountable.

13. AS they did with the Miniſters of their Princes, ſo they muſt make an Intereſt both with the Courtiers in Heaven and with the Prieſts on Earth; not only bribing them for their Interceſſion, but if they wou'd not favor, at leaſt not to oppoſe their Petitions: for they were commonly of different Factions above as well as below. But you muſt underſtand that the Power of theſe Courtiers was of no ſmall moment, the Government and Protection of all Regions and Citys, particularly of thoſe where they liv'd or govern'd themſelves, being diſtributed

tributed among 'em. There was neither Tree nor Plant; nor Beaſt, Fiſh, or Fowl; nor River, Fountain, nor Hill; nor almoſt any other Creature, but was the ſpecial Care and Delight of one or other of them, and frequently call'd after their Names, as in their Life-time they happen'd to uſe, or love, or admire them. This immediate Direction they were thought to have on the Things now mention'd, as well as over the Diſeaſes of the Body and the Paſſions of the Mind, gave a Reputation and Authority to their pretended Miracles, Apparitions, Divinations, Oracles, and all other Arts of the Cunning, to drain the Pockets of the Credulous. Letter III.

14. AS for the Sanctuarys and the ſecret Arks kept in them, with their many myſterious Doings, their Expiations, Purifications, and other ridiculous, profane, or cruel Ceremonys, and all very burdenſom; theſe, I ſay, were at the beginning ſymbolical, repreſenting the true Hiſtory of the Gods while living on Earth, exhibiting the Reaſons of their Deification, and the Arks in particular containing the Emblems, Marks, or Tokens of the whole Fact, as all a-

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gree who have look'd into the Heathen Myſterys. But theſe things were afterwards manag'd by the Prieſts ſo as to make their imagin'd Intimacy with Heaven more valu'd, and to get Revenues ſettled on themſelves, proportionable to the Laborioufneſs and Importance of the Service in which they were engag'd. Nor did the Multitude of the Rites ſerve a little to amuſe and diſtract the Vulgar from reflecting on matters with more conſideration, their whole Time being almoſt employ'd about them: beſides that they muſt needs entertain a high Opinion of them, who cou'd affix Sanctity to Times, Places, and Perſons, and to ſuch things as were either indifferent in their own Natures, or ſeem'd the fartheſt imaginable from being religious. Moreover, there was not wanting ſometimes a mutual Compact between the Prince and the Prieſt, whereby the former oblig'd himſelf to ſecure all theſe Advantages to the latter, if he in return would preach up his abſolute Power over the People, on whoſe well-meaning Underſtandings he cou'd make what Impreſſions he pleas'd at any time.

15. TO

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15. TO the Authority of Princes they added their own Inventions about Hell (as I ſhow'd before in this Letter, and alſo in the laſt I ſent you) not contenting themſelves to terrify Men with Ice and Flames, deep Mire and Darkneſs, they added Vultures, Rolling-Stones, Wheels, and Chains; Hydras, Centaurs, Harpies, Chimeras, Sphynxes, Gorgons, Dragons, and a World of other Monſters, the Executioners of the Princes Tyranny. They told 'em alſo of Ghoſts and Specters, Viſions and Voices, amazing the Vulgar with the tremendous Sounds of Tartarus, Erebus, the black and roaring Waves of

Styx, Acheron, Phlegethon, Lethe, Cocytus, Avernus;

with the hideous barking of triple-headed CERBERUS, the dogged Sullenneſs of CHARON the Ferryman: but the inexorable Furys, ALECTO, TISIPHONE, and MEGÆRA, were more dreaded by far than PLUTO or PROSERPINA, tho Sovereign Governors over thoſe infernal Regions.

From

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From what I ſaid before about the Origin of Ghoſts and Aſtrology, you may be ſure they were addicted to all manner of Divination and Magick, ſuch as [1] Augurys and Auſpicys, [2] Extiſpicys, [3] Necromancy and Necyomancy, [4] Pyromancy, [5] Pſychomancy, [6] Nephelomancy, [7] Hydromancy, [8] Capnomancy, [9] Sortileges, with other numberleſs and ſuperſtitious Vanitys, which are continu'd in moſt parts of the World to this very Time, and which may be found deſcrib'd at large in VANDALE. We may imagin, from the ſame Reaſons, that they abounded with Witches, Sorcerers, and Fortune-tellers, who, by virtue of a Covenant or [10] Compact with the Dæmons, by their Knowledg of the

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[1] *Divining by Birds and Signs.* [2] *By the Entrals of Animals.* [3] *By the Dead and Ghoſts.* [4] *By Fire.* [5] *By Souls.* [6] *By the Clouds.* [7] *By Water.* [8] *By Smoak.* [9] *By Lots, whether in Paſſages of Books or otherwiſe.*

[10] Quis labor hic ſuperis, Cantus Herbaſque ſequendi
Spernendiq; Timor? Cujus Commercia PACTI
Obſtrictos habuere Deos? Parere neceſſe eſt,
An juvat? Ignota tantum pietate merentur,
An tacitis valuere minis? Hoc Juris in omnes
Eſt illis ſuperos? An habent hæc Carmina certum
Imperioſa Deum, qui Mundum cogere, quicquid
Cogitur ipſe, poteſt? *Lucan. Pharſal. l. 6.*

Stars,

*

Stars, and by the occult Qualitys of certain Herbs, Stones, barbarous Words, and Charms, and by pricking, or melting, or burying the Images of the Partys concern'd, pretended to make the Gods appear, and to raiſe the Ghoſts of the Dead; to darken the Sun and Moon, and make the Planets more backward, nay to bring down the Stars from the Firmament; to transform themſelves and others into various Shapes; to afflict whom they pleas'd with Diſtempers; procure Love or Hatred; foretel future Events; diſcover hidden Treaſures; ſpirit away Peoples Corn, or Milk, or other Goods; change little Children in their Cradles; and a thouſand more ſuch Pranks, tedious to relate, and impoſſible for thinking Men to believe. But what the Learned and the Prudent thought of all theſe Pretenders to extraordinary Knowledg, old ENNIUS will frankly tell you in his rugged Meaſures. Letter III.

[1] *I value not one ruſh a Marſian Augur,*

Nor

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[1] Non habeo denique nauci Marſum Augurem,

Non

Nor Country Fortunetellers, nor Town Star-gazers,
Nor Jugling-Gypſies, nor yet Dream-Interpreters:
For not by Skill or Art are theſe Diviners;
But ſuperſtitious Prophets, Gueſſers impudent,
Or idle Rogues, or craz'd, or mere ſtarving Beggars.
They know no way themſelves, yet others would direct;
And crave a Groat of thoſe, to whom they promiſe Riches,
Thence let 'em take the Groat, and give back all the reſt.

We may add here the fabulous Storys of the Heathens (much like our modern Tales of Fairys) concerning their Sylvans, Fauns and Satyrs; their Larvæ

Non vicanos Aruſpices, non de circo Aſtrologos,
Non Iſiacos Conjectores, non Interpretes Somnium:
Non enim ſunt ii aut ſcientia aut arte Divini,
Sed ſuperſtitioſi Vates, impudenteſq; Harioli,
Aut inertes, aut inſani, aut quibus Egeſtas imperat;
Qui ſibi ſemitam non ſapiunt, alteri monſtrant viam,
Quibus divitias pollicentur ab iis Drachmam ipſi petunt,
De his divitiis ſibi deducant Drachmam, reddant cætera. *Cic. de Divinat. lib. 1.*

and

and Lemures; their Nymphs of the Seas, Rivers, Fountains, Hills, and Woods, ſuch as the Nereids, Naiads, Dryads, Hamadryads, Oreads, and if there be any more like to theſe, only fit to ſcare Women and Children. Letter III.

16. LET's now return, if you pleaſe, to the higher Powers; for as in Life ſo after Death they were of ſeveral Orders, Gods of the upper, and Gods of the lower Form, the [1] Nobility and [2] Commons, as alſo [3] intermediate, inferior, and vagabond Dæmons (originally from the Suppoſition of departed Souls) who had no certain Habitation, but wander'd in the Air, and were conſtantly ſent on Errands, either to carry the Prayers of Men to their Superiors, or to acquaint the World with the Wrath or Favor of the Gods, whereof they were commonly thought to be the Miniſters and Executioners, for thoſe Princes had their Armys in Heaven as well as on Earth. But as the

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[1] Dii majorum Gentium.
[2] Dii minorum Gentium.
[3] Dii medioxumi, &c.

Hea-

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Heathens ſent the beſt of their Gods to Heaven, ſo they recall'd 'em again at their Pleaſure, confining their Preſence to ſome ſmall Chappel, or to the poor Idol within that: for they imagin'd that many of them liv'd in Tombs or wander'd in the Air, before they help'd 'em to thoſe Accommodations, where the Deſires of their Petitioners were more agreeably heard than in any other place. They often fell down before the Work of their own Hands, which, had it Life or Reflection, ought rather to worſhip them from whoſe Skill all its Excellency had bin deriv'd: but the wiſer Mice, Swallows, and Spiders made very bold with their Statues, notwithſtanding the virtue of Conſecration, while ſilly Men were forc'd themſelves to protect what they fear'd and ador'd. Theſe very Statues are an Argument of their human Figure and Original, and we know the reſpect that was paid to the Statues, even of living Princes. Their Shrines were often viſited by the moſt ignorant and devout, who alſo hung the Temples round with Offerings and rich Preſents, conſulted the Oracles in all dubious Events, bound themſelves by Vows in their Diſtreſs, believ'd their

their very Dreams to be divinely inſpir'd, and made their Religion in every reſpect as troubleſom to others as to themſelves. From what they practis'd on Earth, there was not a darling Paſſion or Game of their great Men (ſuch as drinking, wenching, or hunting) but the like were aſcrib'd to the Gods. Wherefore we often read of their Amours, Marriages, Rapes and Adulterys; their Diſſenſions, Revellings, Quarrels, and Wounds; their Revenges and Thefts; their Complaints and manifold Diſtreſſes, being ſometimes expos'd, at other times impriſon'd, and once fairly beaten out of their Cittadel in Heaven by the Giants, to ſeek in a pitiful manner for ſhelter on Earth; all which things demonſtrate their Earthly Original. We need not wonder after this to find, that they are always repreſented in the State wherein they dy'd, and with all the diſtinguiſhing Marks in which they liv'd. Thus are ſome of 'em ever old, and others ever young; Parents, Children, and Relations; ſome lame and blind, of different Colours and Appetites; ſome cloven-footed (whence the preſent vulgar notion of the Devil) ſome furniſh'd with

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Letter III. with Wings, or arm'd with Swords, Spears, Helmets, Clubs, Forks and Bows; or drawn in their Chariots by Lions, Tygers, Horſes, Sea-calfs, Peacocks, and Doves. Now all theſe things were partly borrow'd from their true Hiſtory, and are partly allegorical, poetical, and fabulous Diſguiſes of what is no longer perfectly known nor underſtood.

17. ÆNOMAUS, EUHEMERUS, LUCIAN, and many other Perſons who made uſe of their Reaſon, did fearleſly mock the Deitys for being naturaliz'd of this or that Place, where they exercis'd every one the Trade wherein he excell'd. Thus APOLLO had an Office of Intelligence, and told Fortunes at Delphos; ESCULAPIUS ſet up an Apothecary's Shop at Pergamus; VENUS kept a noted Baudyhouſe at Paphos; VULCAN had a Blackſmith's Forge in Lemnos; ſome were Midwives, ſome Huntreſſes, and all of them traffick'd where they cou'd: for they us'd, like us Mortals, ſuch as they had formerly bin, when they did not thrive in one place, to remove into ſome other more convenient for

for their Buſineſs. As all Events were believ'd to be the Effects of their Love or Diſpleaſure, ſo Men found out ſeveral Methods to thank or appeaſe them; and particularly gave 'em (by way of acknowledgment for the reſt) the Firſt-Fruits of all Productions, whether of Animals or Vegetables, with Tythes and other Offerings which they were bound to pay to their Living Princes. Nor was there any thing almoſt that came amiſs in their Sacrifices; for what was the averſion of one prov'd the delight of another, and ſome of 'em would be content with nothing under human Victims, an Argument of their bloody Diſpoſition in this World. We often find them highly reſenting the Affront (as Princes and Great Men uſe to do) when their Altars were neglected, eſpecially if the People feaſted other Gods; and Men have not leſs frequently in their Turns reproach'd the Divine Powers with Ingratitude, and even outrag'd their Statues (being ſometimes inclin'd to Rebellion) when they thought themſelves not ſufficiently requited for the rich Preſents or Bribes which they gave them. Letter III.

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18. BUT tho the more learned and virtuous had many times better Notions of Things, yet we find the Sentiments of ſome of 'em mighty fluctuating and obſcure, principally occaſion'd by the Perſecution that was ſure to attend the Truth, or any attempt towards a general Reformation, witneſs the Death of SOCRATES. We may obſerve from [1] PLUTARCH, that the true Reaſon why the Theory of the Stars and Planets was ſo little, or at leaſt not ſo generally known, was, that the common People wou'd never endure to hear thoſe things made ſubject to a Philoſophical Examination, or explain'd by the ordinary Laws of Nature, by involuntary Cauſes, and blind Facultys, while they held 'em to be intelligent, eternal, and immortal Gods. And therefore when ANAXAGORAS diſcover'd that the Moon had but a bor-

[1] Ουδ' ὁ λογος ενδοξος ην, αλλ' απορρητος ετι και δι' ολιγων, και μετ' ευλαβειας τινος η πιστεως βαδιζων; ου γὰρ ηνειχοντο τους φυσικους και μετεωρολεσχας τοτε καλουμενους, ὡς εις αιτιας αλογους και δυναμεις απρονοητους, και κατηναγκασμενα παθη, διατριβοντος το θειον. In vita Niciæ.

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row'd Light from the Sun, and ſo gave the Reaſons of its Wax and Wane, ſuch a Doctrine durſt not be made publick, but was ſecretly communicated to very few, and even to them under a Promiſe of Fidelity. Indeed a great many eminent Perſons in Europe and Aſia, both underſtood themſelves the Origin of the Religions commonly receiv'd, and ſometimes have dar'd to diſcover their Vanity, Inſufficiency, and Impoſture to others. But ſuch as at any time thus aſſerted the Unity of the Deity, and expos'd Superſtition, we ought not to reckon for Heathens, by which Expreſſion is properly underſtood Idolaters who believe a plurality of Gods, and that pretend to have particular Revelations from them, with ſeveral ſorts of Rites inſtituted to their Honor as they were thought to act in diſtinct Provinces, or elſe to commemorate their particular Actions. The Jews (who thought all the People of the World, but themſelves, to be of this kind) uſually call'd 'em the Nations, from the Greek whereof we have the word Heathens, and Gentiles from the Latin. All thoſe therefore who had Penetration enough to diſcover, and Courage to op-

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poſe the Folly or Craft of this Theology, were call'd and reputed Atheiſts, and treated as ſuch by the Multitude at the Inſtigation of the Prieſts. Several Perſons, eſpecially among the Philoſophers, were fin'd and impriſon'd, ſome were ſent into Exile, others judicially ſentenc'd to Death, many torn in pieces by the Rabble, and all of them conſtantly branded with Impiety for disbelieving the Myſterys, or expoſing the Holy Cheats of their Times. But no thanks are due to the Heathen Prieſts, that fewer Inſtances of this kind occur among them than the Chriſtians; for, beſides that moſt of the Heathen Prieſts differ'd little from Civil Magiſtrates, and that many of them did not continue in their Office for Life, they were likewiſe in perfect ſubjection to the State: whereas the Chriſtian Prieſts (except in a very few Proteſtant Countrys) overtop the Government, and are every where abſolute Maſters of the Underſtanding of the Laity. In our Diſcourſes therefore of the Antients, we are to aſcribe their ſound Notions or moral Practices to the Light of Reaſon, whereof Heatheniſm was a notorious Corruption. For want of obſerving this Diſtinction,

tinction, there are infinite Miſtakes committed. One raſhly maintains that Heatheniſm was a better Foundation for Virtue than Chriſtianity, whereas he ought to have ſaid no more (at moſt) than that the Law of Nature was often better fulfill'd by Heathens than Chriſtians. Another thinks all thoſe to have bin Idolaters who liv'd when Heatheniſm prevail'd, than which there cannot be a groſſer Error. Can any Man be ſo ſtupid as to count CICERO (for example) a Heathen, who, in his admirable Treatiſes *of Divination* and *of the Nature of the Gods*, has demonſtratively ſubverted their Polytheiſm, Sacrifices, pretended Revelations, Prophecys, and Miracles; their Oracles, Augurys, Oneirocriticks, Incantations, and all Fopperys of the like ſort? MINUTIUS FELIX, TERTULLIAN, and other Primitive Apologiſts for Chriſtianity, tranſcrib'd their beſt Arguments againſt Heatheniſm out of theſe and the like Books, and very often in the ſame words. ARNOBIUS, after doing Juſtice to others, maintains, Letter III.

Letter III. maintains, that if [1] TULLY's Works were read, the Chriſtians need not trouble themſelves with Writing; and, after acknowledging that he did with much Ingenuity, Conſtancy, Boldneſs, and greater Piety explode the Gods, tells us that many Heathens did for that reaſon not only decry thoſe Books, and avoid reading them; but were alſo for ſolliciting the Senate to burn and aboliſh them: whereas, to uſe the judicious

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[1] Quem quidem locum plene jamdudum homines pectoris vivi, tam Romanis Literis explicavere, quam Græcis, & ante omnes Tullius, Romani diſertiſſimus Generis, nullam veritus Impietatis Invidiam, ingenue, conſtanter, & libere, quid ſuper tali Opinatione ſentiret, pietate cum majore monſtravit. A quo ſi res ſumere Judicii veritate conſcriptas, non verborum Luculentias pergeretis, probata eſſet & hæc Cauſa, nec ſecundas (ut dicitur) actiones nobis ab Infantibus poſtularet. Sed quid aucupia verborum, ſplendoremque ſermonis peti ab hoc dicam, cum ſciam eſſe non paucos qui averſentur & fugiant Libros de hoc ejus, nec in aurem velint admittere Lectionem Opinionum ſuarum præſumpta vincentem? Cumque alios audiam muſſitare indignanter & dicere, oportere ſtatui per Senatum aboleantur ut hæc ſcripta, quibus Chriſtiana Religio comprobetur, & vetuſtatis opprimatur auctoritas? Quinimo ſi fiditis exploratum vos dicere quicquam de Diis veſtris, Erroris convincite Ciceronem; temeraria & impia dicitare refellitote, redarguite, comprobate: nam intercipere ſcripta, & publicatam velle ſubmergere Lectionem, non eſt Deos defendere, ſed veritatis Teſtificationem timere. *Lib.* 3. *adverſus Gent.*

words

words of our Author, *to ſuppreſs thoſe Books, or to prohibit the publick reading of them, was not to defend the Gods, but to fear the Teſtimony of Truth.* I cou'd name a great number of other Perſons remarkable for their Valor, Piety, or Juſtice, who were much farther from being Idolaters than their Accuſers; and ſhou'd no more be denominated Heathens, than thoſe can be now call Mahometans, who, tho living at Mecca, disbelieve the Alcoran. Now, ſuch as will have theſe to be Mahometans, or thoſe to be Heathens, plainly ſhow their Ignorance of what is meant by the Words, or that they perceive not the Diſtinction between the Law of Nature and all poſitive Inſtitutions. Letter III.

19. TO be ſhort, MADAM, the Religion of the Gentiles (as contrary or ſuperadded to the Light of Reaſon) is ſuch as cou'd not influence Virtue or Morality very much in this Life, nor afford any certain Hopes or Security againſt the Terror of Death. 'Tis true, there were many among the Heathens, who, loath to believe their Religion ſo groundleſs and ridiculous as

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it ſeem'd to appear, eſpecially from the Deſcriptions of the Poets, wou'd have their numberleſs Gods to be nothing elſe but the various Appellations, Attributes, or Provinces of ſome one Being, whether it were the Sun, or BACCHUS, or any God beſides, of whom they had a better Opinion. Legiſlators did put the beſt face they cou'd upon the matter, and, without anxious Inquiry into the Truth or Falſhood of things, they approv'd of all that contributed to keep Mankind in order, that excited 'em to Virtue by Example and Rewards, that deter'd 'em from Vice by Puniſhments and Diſgrace. But others, as the well-meaning Philoſophers, allegoriz'd all their Doctrins into mere natural things, wherein the Deity manifeſts his Efficacy, Bounty, or Goodneſs; from which threefold Conſideration proceeded the famous Diſtinction of their Poetical, Political, and Philoſophical Theology. Yet the more diſcerning Perſons laught at theſe ſhifts, well knowing that it was impoſſible to make any tolerable Apology for moſt of their Fables. CICERO therefore condemns the Stoicks for pretending that all the Greek Theology was myſterious,

myſterious. *Firſt* ZENO,[1] ſays he, *after him* CLEANTHES, *and then* CHRYSIPPUS, *were at great pains to no purpoſe, to give a reaſonable Explication of commentitious Fables, and to account for the Etymology of the very Names of every God: which proceeding plainly ſhows that they believe not the Truth of theſe things in the literal ſenſe.* However, to give a Specimen of their Allegorys, they made JUPITER and JUNO, to ſignify the Air and Clouds; NEPTUNE and THETIS, the Sea and Flouds; CERES and BACCHUS, the Earth and all its Productions; MERCURY and MINERVA, the ingenious Talents of the Mind, as Learning, Merchandize, Arts, or the like; CUPID and VENUS, our earneſt Deſires and amorous Inclinations; MARS and BELLONA, Diſſenſions and Wars; PLUTO and PROSERPINA, Letter III.

[1] Magnam moleſtiam ſuſcepit, ac minime neceſſariam, primus Zeno, poſt Cleanthes, deinde Chryſippus, commentitiarum fabularum reddere rationem: vocabulorum, cur quique ita appellati ſint, cauſas explicare. Quod cum facitis, illud profecto confitemini, longe aliter rem ſe habere atque hominum opinio ſit. *De Nat. Deor. l.* 3.

Mines,

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Mines, Treaſures, and whatever lies conceal'd under ground. So they proceeded to explain away the reſt of the Gods; and, as Allegorys are as fruitful as our Imaginations, ſcarce any two Authors cou'd wholly agree in their Opinions. But ſuppoſing the Truth of the matter had bin as any or all of 'em wou'd have it, yet their Religion was not a whit the better, and deſerv'd to be aboliſh'd; ſince, whatever were the Speculations of a few among the Learned, 'tis evident that the Vulgar took all theſe to be very real Gods, of whom they ſtood in mighty fear, and to whom they paid Divine Adoration: not to inſiſt on the Trouble and Expenſiveneſs of their Rites, or the Cheats and Dominion of the Prieſts. This was clearly perceiv'd by CICERO, who, enumerating the ſeveral kinds of the Heathen Gods, *From another Reaſon,* [1] ſays he, *and indeed a phyſical one, has proceeded a great multitude of Gods, which, being intro-*

[1] Alia quoque ex ratione, & quidem phyſica, magna fluxit multitudo Deorum, qui, inducti ſpecie humana, fabulas Poetis ſuppeditaverunt, hominum autem vitam ſuperſtitione omni referſerunt. *De Nat. Deor. l.* 2.

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duc'd under human Shape, have ſupply'd the Poets with Fables, but at the ſame time have fill'd the Life of Men with all ſorts of Superſtition. The ſame may be as truly ſaid of the modern Saints and Images: for notwithſtanding the nice Diſtinctions of ſupreme and abſolute, of inferior and relative Worſhip; all the common People are downright groſs Idolaters; and as to the multitude of their Obſervations, the Impoſtures or Power of their Clergy in the places where this Worſhip is eſtabliſh'd, the Superſtitions of the whole World put together wou'd, in reſpect of them, make a very eaſy and tolerable Religion. Nor ought we to forget that this new Idolatry of the Chriſtians is altogether grounded, as that of the antient Heathens, on the exceſſive Veneration of dead Men and Women; but improv'd by degrees to ſuch a pitch by the Artifices of the Prieſts, who allure others by this example to follow their Directions, which always tend to the Increaſe of their own Glory, Power, and Profit.

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20. THE preſent Heathens, who inhabit the greateſt part of Africa, vaſt Tracts of Aſia, almoſt all America, and ſome few Corners of Europe, agree very much with the Antients in their Opinions, which is the reaſon that I have hitherto omitted ſome things I mention under this Head, to avoid Repetition. But they diſagree among themſelves in different places, as the Antients did. They have their ſeveral Coſmogonias, or Accounts of the Creation of the World; and their Theogonias, or Genealogys of the Gods, whom ſome hold to be coequal, others ſubordinate, ſome to be all good, others again to be all bad: and many that there are two ſoveteign Principles of Good and Ill, ſuch as the OROMAZES and ARIMANES of the old Chaldeans: nor are there wanting who maintain the Divine Unity, ſometimes with, and ſometimes without inferior Miniſters; as there be who aſſert the Eternity and Immenſity of the Univerſe, and that all things happen by an irreſiſtible Decree of Fate. Their Sentiments are as different about Providence, the Duration of the World,

World, and a future State; whether the Soul be immortal, is confin'd after Death to any certain Manſions, or tranſmigrates out of one Body into another, this laſt being the moſt prevailing Opinion. They diverſify their Sacrifices with numberleſs Rites and Ceremonys, one Nation worſhipping that Animal whereof another makes an Offering to its God; and one Man religiouſly uſing that Geſture or Garb, which another rejects as unbecoming and profane: for as JUVENAL obſerves of the old Egyptians, Letter III.

Such is the Madneſs of the thoughtleſs Mob,
Each place abhors the Deitys of others,
And own no Gods but what themſelves adore.[1]

They perform Divine Service on the Tops of Hills, in the open Air, or in Temples, and Groves, or Caves.

[1] Inde furor vulgo, quod Numina vicinorum
Odit uterque locus, cum ſolos credat habendos
Eſſe Deos, quos ipſe colit. *Sat.* 15.

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They believe good and bad Dæmons, and guardian Powers of Places and Men. They have ſeveral ſubordinate Degrees of Prieſts and Prieſteſſes, Colleges in many parts for their Education, and religious Houſes for their Maintenance. They have their ſacred Books, Traditions, and Images; pretended Miracles, Prophecys, Revelations, and Oracles; Sorcerys, Augurys, Sortileges, Omens, and all ſorts of Divination. As they have their Merry-meetings where they eat and drink, ſing and dance before their Gods; ſo they have their more melancholy Seaſons, when they not only mortify themſelves with ſtrange Auſteritys of Faſting, Abſtinence from Women, coarſe Habits, long Pilgrimages, or other laborious Pennances: but they alſo burn and whip, and cut and ſlaſh their Bodys in a moſt cruel manner; vainly imagining to honor or pleaſe the Deity by ſuch things as do themſelves real hurt, and no body elſe any good: When the Unintelligibleneſs or Abſurdity of any of their Practices or Doctrins is objected to them, they preſently tell you that nothing is impoſſible

poſſible to the higher Powers, and that theſe are Myſterys neither to be fathom'd or examin'd by the finite Underſtanding of Man; as may be read in almoſt all the Travels of all Nations. Letter III.

21. HAVING given this ſummary Account, SERENA, of antient and modern Heatheniſm, we may remark that almoſt every Point of thoſe ſuperſtitious and idolatrous Religions are in theſe or groſſer Circumſtances reviv'd by many Chriſtians in our Weſtern Parts of the Word, and by all the Oriental Sects: as Sacrifices, Incenſe, Lights, Images, Luſtrations, Feaſts, Muſick, Altars, Pilgrimages, Faſtings, religious Celibacy and Habits, Conſecrations, Divinations, Sorcerys, Omens, Preſages, Charms, the Worſhip of dead Men and Women, a continual Canonization of more, Mediators between God and Men, good and evil Dæmons, guardian Genius's, Male and Female tutelar Powers to whom they dedicate Temples, appoint Feaſts and peculiar Modes of Worſhip, not only cantoning all Places among 'em, but likewiſe

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likewiſe the Cure of Diſeaſes, and the diſpoſal of every thing which Men are glad to want or enjoy. Theſe things, I confeſs, are not obſerv'd in all places alike; yet more or leſs in every place, and rivetted by Education where they are not eſtabliſh'd by Law. But how little right theſe have to the Denomination of Chriſtians, who defend the very things which JESUS CHRIST went about to deſtroy, is evident to all them who don't conſider Chriſtianity as a politick Faction or a bare Sound; but as an Inſtitution deſign'd to rectify our Morals, to give us juſt Ideas of the Divinity, and conſequently to extirpate all ſuperſtitious Opinions and Practices. In plain and proper Terms this is Antichriſtianiſm, nothing being more diametrically repugnant to the Doctrin of CHRIST; and as far as any is tinctur'd with it, ſo far he is a Heathen or a Jew, but no Chriſtian.

22. THIS Reflection is a Tribute due to Religion and Truth; nor, in my opinion, is the gratifying of mens Curioſity a ſufficient Recommendation

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to any Diſquiſitions, without ſome general Inſtruction naturally conducing to Wiſdom or Virtue. And indeed this whole Diſſertation, MADAM, is a memorable Proof and Inſtance to what an aſtoniſhing degree of Extravagance human Nature is capable of arriving; and that in all times Superſtition is the ſame, however the Names of it may vary, or that it may have different Objects, or be greater or leſs in degrees, as any Country has more or leſs Liberty of Conſcience and free Speech. But if any ſhou'd wonder how Men cou'd leave the direct and eaſy Path of Reaſon to wander in ſuch inextricable Mazes, let him but conſider how in very many and conſiderable Regions the plain Inſtitution of JESUS CHRIST cou'd degenerate into the moſt abſurd Doctrins, unintelligible Jargon, ridiculous Practices, and inexplicable Myſterys: and how almoſt in every corner of the world Religion and Truth cou'd be chang'd into Superſtition and Prieſtcraft. In a word, the Subject of this long Letter is elegantly comprehended in thoſe four Lines which are in every body's mouth: Letter III.

Natural Religion was eaſy firſt and plain,
Tales made it Myſtery, Offrings made it Gain;
Sacrifices and Shows were at length prepar'd,
The Prieſts ate Roaſt-meat, and the People ſtar'd.

I am afraid, by the time you come thus far, you'l be as weary of reading as I am now of writing; and therefore, MADAM, for both our Eaſe I ſhall add no more on this occaſion, but that I ſhall continue all my Life your moſt ſincere and obedient Servant.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

To a Gentleman in Holland, ſhowing SPINOSA'S *Syſtem of Philoſophy to be without any Principle or Foundation.*

1. YOU gueſs very right, SIR, when you fancy that in ſo charming a Retirement, I injoy the moſt perfect Happineſs this Earth can poſſibly afford, *Health of Body and Tranquillity of Mind.* Beſides the Purity of the Air, this Country abounds in all manner of Game; and my Neighbors ſeem wholly unacquainted with any other Fraud or Violence, than what they uſe againſt wild Beaſts,

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Fowl, and Fiſh. You cannot read in their Looks (as in thoſe of your tattling and buſy Citizens) the good or bad Succeſs of Fleets and Armys: they know as little of foreign Affairs, as of what paſſes in the Planetary Worlds; and if ſometimes they inform themſelves about the State of things at Court, 'tis not to learn who is in favor or diſgrace, who is to be next in or out of the Miniſtry; but to know how the publick Good of the Nation is manag'd, how its Security, Wealth, and Power are preſerv'd. Whoever is able and active to promote theſe ends, him they eſteem their beſt Friend; nor can the Name or Pretence of any Party make them become his Enemys.

2. **BUT, Sir, I** cannot eaſily forgive your fearing that any thing which comes from you ſhou'd diſturb my Repoſe among ſuch innocent People, every Letter you write being as agreeable and inſtructive as their Converſation is plain and ſincere. Your magnificent Expreſſions in praiſe of SPINOSA I cannot blame, no more than the exceſſive Encomiums which LUCRETIUS

CRETIUS took all opportunitys to heap on EPICURUS: for ſo long as in your Opinion he paſſes for ſo extraordinary a Perſon, ſo much above the common rate of Mankind, and ſo happy above all Philoſophers in his Diſcoverys, you cannot in juſtice ſpeak leſs than you have done, and, were you a Poet, you wou'd raiſe your Strains yet higher. Letter IV.

3. FOR my part, I ſhall always be far from ſaying that SPINÖSA did nothing well, becauſe in many things he ſucceeded ſo ill. On the contrary, he has had ſeveral lucky Thoughts, and appears to have bin a Man of admirable natural Endowments, tho his ſhare of Learning (except in ſome parts of the Mathematicks, and in the underſtanding of the Rabbins) ſeems to have bin very moderate. I grant you likewiſe that he was truly ſober, obſervant of the Laws of his Country, and not poſſeſt with the ſordid Paſſion of heaping up Riches: for there's nothing more undeniable from antient Hiſtory and preſent Experience, than that as the Profeſſors of Truth are not always the greateſt

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Saints, ſo Men of erroneous Principles have often led excellent Lives; and you know that Monſieur BAILE, in his *various Thoughts upon Comets*, has manifeſtly prov'd that even Atheiſm does not neceſſarily lead a Man to be wicked, tho he acknowledges withal that the Conſiderations of Safety, Reputation, and Intereſt, are not ſuch effectual Reſtraints againſt Immorality, as the Doctrins of Religion. I further agree with you that SPINOSA's Adverſarys have gain'd nothing on his Diſciples by the contumelious and vilifying Epithets they beſtow on his Perſon for the ſake of his Opinions; which ſhameful little Artifices are only fit for the Patrons of Error, being contrary to Religion as well as to common Civility, and may well enrage a ſuperſtitious Mob, but can never impoſe on Men of Senſe, who judg of things as they are in themſelves, and not as repreſented to them by paſſionate and unjuſt Antagoniſts.

4. DON'T imagine, Sir, that I expreſs this Moderation either out of Complaiſance to the Reſpect you bear to the Memory of SPINOSA, or that

I am now more convinc'd of his Opinions than you formerly us'd to find me: for after this manner it is that I think all Men in the World ought to be treated in matters of mere Speculation, leaving their immoral Actions (if they be guilty of any) to the Care of the Law, and the Animadverſion of the Magiſtrate. But I am ſo far from being a Proſelite to thoſe Points whereof you and I have diſcours'd at your Houſe, that I am perſuaded the whole Syſtem of SPINOSA is not only falſe, but alſo precarious and without any ſort of Foundation. I do not mean that there are no incidental Truths in his Book, no more than that there are no miſtakes careleſly crept into thoſe that are better: but I maintain that no ſuch thing follows from his Syſtem, which if it be gratuitous and without any Principles, cannot ſerve to explain any paſt or future Difficultys, nor to give better Reaſons for what we commonly receive. Letter IV.

5. LET him have bin never ſo honeſt a Man, yet I ſuppoſe you'l not exempt him from many human Frailtys to which the beſt are ſubject: and I am inclin'd to ſuſpect that his chiefeſt

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Weakneſs was an immoderate Paſſion to become the Head of a Sect, to have Diſciples and a new Syſtem of Philoſophy honor'd with his Name, the Example being freſh and inviting from the good Fortune of his Maſter CARTESIUS. I do not make this Concluſion from his frequent uſe of ſuch Expreſſions as *my Philoſophy*, or *our Syſtem*, and the like: nor wou'd I have every man accus'd of this Affectation who makes ſome particular Diſcoverys, or who even changes the whole Face of Philoſophy, and introduces a Method abſolutely new; for ſuch Perſons may without all queſtion be acted by no other Motives beſides the Love of Truth and the Benefit of the Society, nor will they reject any thing but what they really conceive to be hurtful, erroneous, or unprofitable. SOCRATES, notwithſtanding the mighty Reformation he made in Philoſophy, was never ſuſpected to aim at being the Head of a new Sect; and CICERO very truly obſerves that his Diſciples multiply'd their Conteſts, divided into Partys, and ſpoil'd his Doctrin when they

they form'd it into a [1] Syſtem, by which they pretended, no doubt, to explain a thouſand things whereof SOCRATES never thought, and to which we find they reduc'd even thoſe airy Speculations which he diſcarded as uſeleſs to Life, expenſive of Time, of no concern to the World, and never to be comprehended. Letter IV.

6. BUT when a Man builds a whole Syſtem of Philoſophy either without any firſt Principles, or on a precarious Foundation: and afterwards when he's told of this Fault, and put in mind of the Difficultys that attend it, yet neither ſupplies that Defect, nor accounts for thoſe Difficultys by any thing he has already eſtabliſh'd, nor yet acknowledges his Miſtake; we may reaſonably ſuſpect that he's too much in love with his new World (for ſuch is a Syſtem of Philo-

[1] Illam autem Socraticam Dubitationem de omnibus rebus, & nulla adhibita affirmatione conſuetudinem diſſerendi, reliquerunt. Ita facta eſt diſſerendi (quod minime Socrates probabat) ars quædam, Philoſophiæ & rerum ordo, & deſcriptio diſciplinæ. *Academic. Quæſt. l.* 1.

ſophy)

Letter IV.

ſophy) ever to admit of a better Creator: whereas a Perſon that propoſes no other view but the manifeſting and propagating of Truth, and that cannot reſt ſatisfy'd with Fancys or Conjectures, wou'd in ſuch Circumſtances be nothing aſham'd to confeſs and amend his Error.

7. NOW let's examine whether SPINOSA be guilty of the Charge I have drawn up againſt him. I ſhall fairly alledg my Proofs, and leave your ſelf to be Judg, tho you ſeem ſo highly prepoſſeſt in his favor. I need not prove to his greateſt Admirer that he acknowledges but one Subſtance in the Univerſe, or that the Matter of all the things in the Univerſe is but one continu'd Being, every where of the ſame nature, however differently modify'd, and endu'd with unchangeable, eſſential, and inſeparable Attributes. Of theſe Attributes (which he ſuppoſes eternal as well as the Subſtance to which they belong) he reckons Extenſion and Cogitation to be the moſt principal; tho he ſuppoſes innumerable others which he has not bin at the pains to name.

name. He has no where ſo much as inſinuated that Motion was one of them; or if he had, we ſhou'd not have believ'd it on his word, nor without more convincing Arguments than he has given that every Portion and Particle of Matter always thinks: for this is contrary to Reaſon and Experience, both which demonſtrate the Extenſion of Matter. Whatever be the Principle of Thinking in Animals, yet it cannot be perform'd but by the means of the Brain. We Men are conſcious of no Thoughts, while the Functions of the Brain are ſuſpended; we find our ſelves to think there, and there only; and we obſerve no ſigns of Thought in any things that want a Brain, whereas every Creature that has one, ſeems to ſhow ſome degree of Thinking by its Actions. As for his Subtiltys to prove under pretence of Reaſon what is thus rejected by Experience, I may ſend you my Thoughts about them another time: for it is not my preſent Deſign to confute all his Errors one by one, but to ſhow that his whole Syſtem is altogether groundleſs, which at one ſtroke deſtroys whatever is built upon it.

Letter IV.

8. WE

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8. WE agree on every ſide that the perpetual Changes in Matter are the Effects of Motion, which produces an Infinity of different Figures, Mixtures, and ſenſible Qualitys. But we muſt diſtinguiſh between local Motion and the moving Force or Action: for local Motion is only a Change of Situation, or the ſucceſſive Application of the ſame Body to the reſpective Parts of ſeveral other Bodys; ſo that this Motion is nothing different from the Body it ſelf, nor any real Being in Nature, but a mere Mode or Conſideration of its Situation, and the Effect of ſome Force or Action without or within the Body. Tho the ordinary Rules of Motion are but Obſervations learnt from the Experience of what commonly paſſes in local Motion, or probable Calculations deduc'd from ſuch Obſervations; yet the Action or moving Force is likewiſe often call'd by the name of Motion, and thus the Effect is confounded with the Cauſe, which has occaſion'd a world of Perplexitys, and Abſurditys. But all thoſe who have treated of the Diverſitys that happen in Matter, muſt have meant this

 Action

Action as their Cauſe, or labor'd to no purpoſe: for this being once explain'd, we can eaſily account for local Motion as its Effect, and not otherwiſe. The Mathematicians generally take the moving Force for granted, and treat of local Motion as they find it, without giving themſelves much trouble about its Original: but the Practice of the Philoſophers is otherwiſe, or rather ought to be ſo. Letter IV.

9. WHOEVER then goes about to explain by their firſt Cauſes the Origin of the World, its preſent Mechaniſm, or the Affections of Matter, muſt begin with the firſt Cauſe of Motion: for no manner of Variety is included in the bare Idea of Extenſion, nor any Cauſe of Alteration; and ſeeing it is Action alone that can poſſibly produce any Change in Extenſion, this Action or Principle of Motion muſt be well clear'd and eſtabliſh'd, or the Syſtem muſt quickly be found defective. If it be only taken for granted, the Syſtem will be but a Hypotheſis; but if prov'd and explain'd, then we may expect to find ſome greater Certitude than hitherto in natural Philoſophy.

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It is not enough then to build on local Motion, which, as we ſaid before, is but an Effect of this Action, as well as all the other Varietys in Nature: ſo is Reſt, which is now generally acknowledg'd to be no Privation nor a State of abſolute Inactivity, as much Force being neceſſary to keep Bodys at reſt as to move them; wherefore local Motion and Reſt are only relative Terms, periſhable Modes, and no poſitive or real Beings.

10. 'TIS hard to determine what were the true Opinions of the moſt antient Sages of Greece; but the generality of Philoſophers every where ſince ANAXAGORAS have laid down as a Principle, that Matter being of it ſelf inactive, a dull and heavy Lump, the Divinity (which was acknowledg'd diſtinct from this Matter) communicated Motion to it, tho after a manner exceeding human Comprehenſion. Hence they proceed to ſhow what Diviſions this Motion made in Matter, what Particles of different Bulk and Figure thence were form'd, and how the Univerſe (I will not ſay how well) and all the Parts thereof came into their preſent

preſent State. SPINOSA, on the contrary, acknowledges no Being ſeparate or different from the Subſtance of the Univerſe, no Being to give it Motion, to continue or to preſerve it, if it has none of its own. He builds on all the common Notions about local Motion, without ever ſhowing any Cauſe of it; being not willing to allow the Impulſe of a preſiding Deity, and unable (as you'll preſently perceive) to produce a better, or as good a Reaſon. Yet he was of opinion that Matter was naturally inactive: for in the ſecond part of his *Ethicks* or Syſtem, Propoſition the thirteenth, Axiom the firſt, he ſays in expreſs terms, [1] *All Bodys are either in motion or at reſt.* And to let you ſee that he did not mean reſpective Reſt, or the Reſiſtance of other Bodys, in the Demonſtration of the ſecond Lemma he further affirms, that [2] *all Bodys may ſometimes be abſolutely mov'd, and ſometimes be abſolutely at reſt.* There can be nothing more poſitive: yet if any or all

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[1] Omnia Corpora moventur vel quieſcunt.

[2] Omnia Corpora —— abſolute jam moveri, jam quieſcere poſſunt.

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Letter IV. the Parcels of Matter may be in abſolute Reſt, they muſt ever perſiſt in that State without ſome external Cauſe to put 'em in motion, and this Cauſe he has no where aſſign'd; beſides that all Matter may be inactive, if any part of it can ever be ſo.

11. SPINOSA has no where in his Syſtem attempted to define Motion or Reſt, which is unpardonable in a Philoſopher, whether done with or without deſign; and yet according to himſelf in his *Ethicks*, [1] *Motion and Reſt are the Cauſes of all the Diverſitys among Bodys*, thence [2] *proceeds the diſtinction of particular Bodys*, and [3] *an Infinity of things proceed from Motion and Reſt.* In proſecuting this Subject I ſhall alledg nothing out of his other

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[1] Corpora ratione motus & quietis, celeritatis & tarditatis, & non ratione ſubſtantiæ ab invicem diſtinguuntur. *Lem.* 1. *ante Prop.* 14. *Part.* 2.

[2] Corpora res ſingulares ſunt, quæ ratione motus & quietis ab invicem diſtinguuntur. *Demonſtrat. Lem.* 3. *ante Prop.* 14. *Ibid.*

[3] Non tamen propterea Deus magis dici poteſt ex libertate voluntatis agere, quam propter ea quæ ex motu & quiete ſequuntur (infinita enim ex his etiam ſequuntur) dici poteſt ex libertate motus & quietis agere. *Corol.* 2. *Prop.* 3. *Part.* 1.

Books:

Books: becauſe that in his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* he has had no occaſion to treat of theſe matters; and that in one of his *Epiſtles* he declares himſelf not anſwerable for any thing in his *Demonſtration of* CARTESIUS's *Principles*; and this he oblig'd MEYER the Publiſher to tell the world in the Preface of the Book, which he has accordingly done: for he compos'd that Work at the requeſt of one of his Diſciples, and built his Demonſtrations on CARTESIUS's Definitions, Poſtulates, and Axioms, which are ſuppos'd but not believ'd to be true. So that the *Ethicks* (to which Title he has reduc'd all his Philoſophy) is his real Syſtem, wherein and in his *Letters* his genuine Sentiments of Philoſophy are only to be found. After dealing thus fairly with him (which is no more than Juſtice requires) there's no need of ſhowing by Inferences that he did not hold Motion to be an eternal Attribute of Matter; which if he had done, we cou'd not have believ'd it without good proof: I ſay, we are ſpar'd theſe pains, ſince he expreſly aſſerts the contrary, and he was ſurely beſt able to acquaint us with his own Opinion. In his firſt Letter Letter IV.

Letter IV. to OLDENBURG, whereby he communicates to him ſome part of his *Ethicks*, thus he writes. [1] *You muſt take heed that by Attribute I underſtand every thing that is conceiv'd by it ſelf and in it ſelf, in ſuch a manner as that the Conception of it does not involve* or ſuppoſe *the Conception of any other thing: as Extenſion, for example, is conceiv'd by it ſelf and in it ſelf, but Motion not ſo; for it is conceiv'd to be in another thing, and the Conception of it involves Extenſion.* This is extremely plain and peremptory; nor ſhall we examine at preſent how true or falſe it may be of Extenſion, which is but an abſtracted Idea, and no more conceivable without a Subject than Motion is.

12. SPINOSA then, who values himſelf in his *Ethicks* on deducing things from their firſt Cauſes (which the Schoolmen term *a priori*) SPINO-

[1] Ubi notandum me per attributum intelligere omne id quod concipitur per ſe & in ſe, adeo ut ipſius Conceptus non involvat Conceptum alterius rei: ut, ex. gr. Extenſio per ſe & in ſe concipitur, at Motus non item; nam concipitur in alio, & ipſius Conceptus involvit Extenſionem.

SA,

SA, I ſay, having given no account how Matter came to be mov'd or Motion comes to be continu'd, not allowing God as firſt Mover, neither proving nor ſuppoſing Motion to be an Attribute (but the contrary) nor indeed explaining what Motion is, he cou'd not poſſibly ſhow how the Diverſity of particular Bodys is reconcilable to the Unity of Subſtance, or to the Sameneſs of Matter in the whole Univerſe: wherefore I may ſafely conclude that his Syſtem is intirely precarious and without any ſort of ground, indigeſted and unphiloſophical. But leſt your Affection ſhou'd biaſs you to think that ſuch a great Man cou'd not ſtumble ſo at the Threſhold, and that he has ſomewhere ſupply'd this enormous Defect tho it might eſcape my Obſervation, I hope you'll believe his own Words to a Perſon who wou'd not implicitly ſwear to his Philoſophy, but whoſe Difference of Opinions did probably make as little Difference in their Affections as in yours and mine. 'Tis a very remarkable thing by what Delays, Shifts, and Excuſes he wou'd avoid ſolving the Objections that were made to him on this Head, which Letter IV.

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keeps me ſtill in the Belief that he cou'd not bear to part with his Syſtem, nor to loſe the hopes of heading a new Sect.

13. BUT be this how it will (for we ought to be reſerv'd in divining the Thoughts or the Dead) the Author of the ſixty third Epiſtle in his *Poſthumous Works* preſſes him by a very ſenſible and modeſt Requeſt, which, without a good Anſwer, overthrows, as we have prov'd, the whole Fabrick of his Philoſophy. [1] *If you have leiſure*, ſays his Friend, *and that opportunity permits, I humbly beg of you the true Definition of Motion, as well as the Explication of that Definition: and after what manner (ſince Extenſion, as conſider'd in it ſelf, is indiviſible, immutable*, &c.) *we can ſhow* a priori *how ſuch and ſo many Varietys cou'd begin, and by conſequence the Exiſtence of Figures in the Particles of any Body, which yet*

[1] Si otium eſt & occaſio ſinit, a te ſubmiſſe peto veram Motus definitionem, ut & ejus explicationem; atque qua ratione (cum Extenſio, quatenus per ſe concipitur, indiviſibilis, immutabilis, &c. ſit) a priori deducere poſſimus tot tamque multas oriri poſſe varietates, & per conſequens Exiſtentiam figuræ in particulis

yet in every Body are various and different from the Figures of the Parts, which constitute the Form of another Body. Well; what says SPINOSA? or does he direct him to any place where this is already done to his hand? Far from it; for in the following Epistle he replies in these words: [1] *Now for the rest, that is to say, concerning Motion, and such things as relate to Method, because they are not yet written in Order, I keep 'em till another opportunity.* His Friend, who wou'd not be put off so slightly, and whose Thirst after Knowledg made him wait with Impatience, brings him again in mind of this Difficulty in the sixty ninth Epistle: [2] *I cannot without great difficulty conceive,* says he, *how* a priori *can be prov'd the Existence of Bodys which have Motions and Figures;*

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culis alicujus Corporis, quæ tamen in quovis Corpore variæ & diversæ sunt a figuris partium quæ alterius Corporis formam constituunt.

[1] Cæterum, de reliquis, nimirum de Motu, quæque ad methodum spectant, quia nondum ordine conscripta sunt, in aliam occasionem reservo.

[2] Difficulter admodum concipere queo, quî a priori Corporum existentia demonstretur quæ Motus & Figuras habent; cum in extensione, rem absolute considerando, nil tale occurrat.

Letter IV. *ſince in Extenſion, conſidering it by it ſelf, nothing like theſe occurs.* To this SPINOSA anſwers without any Explication in the following Letter: [1] *It is not only difficult, as you ſay, but altogether impoſſible to demonſtrate the Exiſtence of partitular Bodys from Extenſion, as* CARTESIUS *conceives it, that is to ſay, an inactive Bulk; for Matter that is at reſt will as much as in it lies continue in its reſt, nor can it be excited to Motion but by a more powerful external Cauſe; and for this reaſon I did not heſitate formerly to affirm that* CARTESIUS's *Principles of natural things were uſeleſs, I will not ſay abſurd.* The other, who knew well enough that SPINOSA did not admit of any external Cauſe, tho his Syſtem (which was finiſh'd before) had not then appear'd, prays him with

[1] Ex Extenſione, ut eam Carteſius concipit, molem ſcilicet quieſcentem, corporum Exiſtentiam demonſtrare non tantum difficile, ut ais, ſed omnino impoſſibile eſt: Materia enim quieſcens, quantum in ſe eſt, in ſua quiete perſeverabit, nec ad motum concitabitur niſi a Cauſa potentiori externa; & hac de Cauſa non dubitavi olim affirmare rerum naturalium Principia Carteſiana inutilia eſſe, ne dicam abſurda.

more

more earneſtneſs than ever to ſpeak his Thoughts without all diſguize, for here he ſhelters himſelf under common Expreſſions. [1] *I wiſh*, ſays his Friend in the one and ſeventieth Letter, *that you wou'd be pleas'd to gratify me in this particular, by telling me how the Variety of things can be ſhown to proceed from the Conception of Extenſion according to your Notions, ſince you mention'd* CARTESIUS'S *Opinion, in which he affirms to be able no other way to deduce this from Extenſion, but by ſuppoſing it to have bin produc'd therein from a Motion impreſt by God.* CARTESIUS *therefore in my Judgment deduces the Exiſtence of particular Bodys not from quieſcent Matter, except the Suppoſition of God as Mover goes for nothing with you, ſince you have not your*

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[1] Velim ut in hac re mihi gratificeris, indicando, quî ex conceptu Extenſionis ſecundum tuas Meditationes varietas rerum a priori poſſit oſtendi, quandoquidem meminiſti Opinionis Carteſianæ, in qua Carteſius ſtatuit ſe eam ex Extenſione nullo alio modo deducere poſſe, quam ſupponendo motu a Deo excitato hoc effectum fuiſſe in Extenſione. Deducit ergo juxta meam Opinionem corporum Exiſtentiam non ex quieſcente materia, niſi forte ſuppoſitionem motoris Dei pro nihilo haberes, quandoquidem, quî illud ex eſſentia

Letter IV. *your ſelf demonſtrated how it ſhou'd neceſſarily follow from the Eſſence of God* a priori; *which,* CARTESIUS *going about to ſhow, he believ'd it to exceed all human Comprehenſion. Wherefore I intreat this thing of you, well knowing you have other Thoughts, unleſs perhaps there be ſome culpable occaſion that has hitherto kept you from making this Matter plain.* This Perſon has done Juſtice to CARTESIUS; for tho his Syſtem is at beſt but an ingenious Philoſophical Romance, yet he was never ſo careleſs or inaccurate as to think of deducing the Variety and Difference of particular Bodys from mere Extenſion, and therefore ſuppos'd God at the beginning to have given a ſhake to the lazy Lump, from which his Matters of the firſt, ſecond, and third Elements ſucceſſively exiſted, and from theſe, after his manner, the Diſpoſition of the whole Univerſe. But SPINOSA neither ſuppoſing the

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eſſentia Dei a priori neceſſario ſequi debeat, abs te non ſit oſtenſum, id, quod Carteſius oſtenſurus, Captum humanum ſuperare credebat. Quare a te hanc rem requiro, ſciens bene te alias Cogitationes habere, niſi alia fortica ſubſit forte cauſa, quare illud hactenus manifeſtum facere nolueris, &c.

ſame Principle, nor eſtabliſhing any other to explain the Varietys of particular Bodys in the Identity of Subſtance, you'll own, I doubt not, that without any Artifice, Paſſion, or Intereſt, I have clearly prov'd what I undertook to you, that his Philoſophy is built on no certain or probable Foundation, but on gratuitous Suppoſitions, from which he deduces what he and his Followers call Demonſtrations. He was accuſtom'd to this way of pretending to demonſtrate things in a Geometrical Method, tho he knew 'em to be falſe, ſince thus he had before demonſtrated CARTESIUS's Principles. But that very Work is a memorable Example how eaſily People may be deceiv'd by this Method (tho in it ſelf abſolutely certain) if they are not us'd to make long Deductions without miſſing one Link in the Chain, if they take any thing for ſelf evident which needs it ſelf to be prov'd, or any thing for prov'd from the Authority of others or their own Prepoſſeſſions. But to return to his Friend, all the Anſwer he receiv'd to his laſt Intreaty was in general words; for in the two and ſeventieth Epiſtle, SPINOSA after rejecting Letter IV.

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jecting CARTESIUS's Definition of Matter, thus beſpeaks him: '*What you deſire of me, whether the Variety of things can be demonſtrated* a priori *from the mere Conception of Extenſion, I think I have already ſhown this to be impoſſible, and that conſequently Matter was ill deſin'd by* CARTESIUS *from Extenſion; whereas it ought to be neceſſarily explain'd by ſome Attribute, which expreſſes an eternal and infinite Eſſence. But, if I live, perhaps I may ſome other time deal more plainly with you about theſe matters: for I have not bin able hitherto to diſpoſe any thing in order about them.* We do not find that he ever did ſo about Motion, which makes it the more inexcuſable, becauſe, altho his *Ethicks* were compleated at this time, yet he might change, add, or take away what he wou'd,

' Quod petis, an ex ſolo Extenſionis conceptu rerum varietas a priori poſſit demonſtrari, credo me jam ſatis clare oſtendiſſe id impoſſibile eſſe, ideoque materiam a Carteſio male definiri per Extenſionem; ſed eam neceſſario debere explicari per Attributum, quod æternam & infinitam Eſſentiam exprimat. Sed de his forſan aliquando, ſi vita ſuppetit, clarius tecum agam; nam huc uſque nihil de his ordine diſponere mihi licuit.

ſince

since the Book was not publish'd till after his Death. Neither cou'd Motion be the Attribute he means here, having directly declar'd the contrary before, and nothing appearing to favor this Notion in all his Works. Letter IV.

14. I NEED not require a better proof that Men of the greateſt Candor and Judgment may be in many things ſeduc'd by Prejudice, ſince you never perceiv'd this Flaw, my Friend; and that you ever extoll'd SPINOSA, for demonſtrating all things *a priori*. On the contrary, in your Letter to me of the Tenth Inſtant, you much inſiſt on the Difficultys which accompany the common Syſtems of Motion, taking it, I ſuppoſe, for granted that your Hero had mended the matter, which you ſee he never did. To take my leave of him therefore, and to apply my Diſcourſe to your ſelf, it is notorious that moſt of thoſe Difficultys you mention, proceed from Peoples confounding the Cauſe with the Effect, or the moving Force with local Motion: and when they think they have given its true Definition, they have really ſaid nothing but that Motion

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tion is Motion, only diverſifying their Terms a little; for when a Bowl runs on the Green, and the Definition of Motion is ask'd, 'tis gravely anſwer'd, that *it is the removing of one Body from the Neighborhood of others*, &c. and this the Bowlers know as well as the Philoſopher, ſeeing it daily with their own Eyes; but 'tis the Cauſe of this Effect they deſire to hear explain'd, of which he's ordinarily as ignorant as they.

15. YOU ſay very truly that even thoſe who carefully diſtinguiſh the Cauſe and the Effect, are yet extremely puzzl'd about the *moving Force* it ſelf, what ſort of Being it is; where it reſides, in Matter or without it; by what means it can move Matter; how it paſſes from one Body to another; or is divided between many Bodys while others are at reſt, and a thouſand more ſuch Riddles. Wherefore not being able to diſcover any ſuch real Being in Nature, nor to determin whether it be a Body or Spirit, and yet leſs to make it a Mode, ſince (among other Objections) no Accident can paſs from one Subject to

to another, nor be without its particular Cauſe in any Subject whatſoever, and that it may be intirely deſtroy'd the Subject remaining ſafe, they are forc'd at laſt to have recourſe to God, and to maintain that as he communicated Motion to Matter at the beginning, ſo he ſtill begets and continues it whenever, and as long as there's occaſion for it, and that he actually concurs to every Motion in the Univerſe. But this Syſtem is ſubject to more fatal Conſequences than thoſe they wou'd avoid by it: for beſides that they hereby deſtroy what many have ſaid about God's impreſſing Motion on Matter at the beginning, as ſomething that was of it ſelf ſufficient for the future; they farther make God the Author of all the Wickedneſs in Nature, tho Motion were ſtill but a Mode. 'Tis he, for example, that actually moves the Tongue of a lying Witneſs, the Hand and Dagger of a Murderer, with ſuch other palpable Difficultys, which all their moral and phyſical Diſtinctions are not able to ſolve. But why ſhou'd I throw away any Words on this Syſtem, ſince in all times, as CICERO obſerves, when the Philoſophers

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Letter IV. ſophers are ignorant of the Cauſe of any thing, they preſently betake themſelves for refuge and ſanctuary to [1] God, which is not to explain things, but to cover their own Negligence or Short-ſightedneſs, their Vanity not ſuffering them to allow any other Cauſe, but God's immediate Concourſe to what they are not able to unfold.

16. YOU do not foreſee perhaps what Doubts you create to your ſelf, and what Work you cut out for me, in demanding my particular Opinion about Motion. 'Tis eaſier at any time to find out the Defects of others than to ſupply them, and a Man is very like to be wrong underſtood who delivers his Opinion (eſpecially if altogether new) before it be guarded with its Proofs and Explication: but our Friendſhip not allowing me to deny you any thing in my power, I ſhall be open and free with you in this particular. I hold then that *Mo-*

[1] Sed omnium talium rerum ratio reddenda eſt: quod vos, cum facere non poteſtis, tanquam in aram confugitis ad Deum. *De Nat. Deor. l.* 3.

tion

tion is eſſential to Matter, that is to ſay, as inſeparable from its Nature as Impenetrability or Extenſion, and that it ought to make a part of its Definition. But as in Matter we diſtinguiſh the *Quantity* of particular Bodys and the *Extenſion* of the whole, of which theſe Quantitys are but ſeveral Determinations or Modes, exiſting and periſhing by their ſeveral Cauſes: ſo, the better to be underſtood, I wou'd have this Motion of the Whole be call'd *Action*, and all local Motions, as direct or circular, faſt or ſlow, ſimple or compounded, be ſtill call'd *Motion*, being only the ſeveral changeable *Determinations* of the *Action* which is always in the Whole, and in every Part of the ſame, and without which it cou'd not receive any Modifications. I deny that Matter is or ever was an inactive dead Lump in abſolute Repoſe, a lazy and unweildy thing; and when I write expreſly on this Subject to you, I hope to evince that this Notion alone accounts for the ſame Quantity of Motion in the Univerſe, that it alone proves there neither needs nor can be any Void, that Matter cannot be truly defin'd without it, that

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that it ſolves all the Difficultys about the moving Force, and all the reſt which we have mention'd before.

17. BUT you'l ſay that, beſides the Singularity of the Opinion, I ſhall make a world of Adverſarys by reaſon of the many Hypotheſes and Doctrins which it unavoidably deſtroys. To this I anſwer, that the Offence is taken, but not given; and that I ſhall thereby be nothing diſquieted, provided I be able to contribute any thing towards the Diſcovery of Truth. This is not a Syſtem of Accommodation, ſuch as thoſe which ſome invent to reconcile other different Syſtems, tho they are not certain that their own is more true than the reſt. But if I be able to prove from the nature of the thing it ſelf, and not to favor or oppoſe any Cauſe, that *Action is eſſential to Matter*, that Matter cannot be rightly conceiv'd nor conſequently be rightly defin'd without it, that nothing can be accounted for in Matter without this eſſential Action, and that it is eaſily ſhown to exiſt in the moſt heavy or hard Bodys; then they may quarrel (who have a mind to it) with God

God or Nature, and not with me, who am but their humble Interpreter. After all, I apprehend no Enemys if I ſhou'd ever publiſh to the World what I may write to any Friend on this Subject; for every Party is neceſſitated to explain the Phenomena of Nature by Motion: and therefore ſuch as believe Matter created, may as well conceive that God at the beginning endu'd it with Action as well as with Extenſion; and thoſe who believe it eternal, may as well believe it eternally active, as eternally diviſible; nor can they ever account for any Change in Nature without admitting this, as I have prov'd before againſt SPINOSA. My only buſineſs is to prove *Matter neceſſarily active as well as extended*, and thence to explain as much as I can of its Affections; but not to meddle in the Diſputes which others may raiſe about its Original or Duration. Letter IV.

18. YOU may perceive, SIR, that I have a great deal of leiſure, and nothing to make me uneaſy, or at leaſt that I won't be made ſo, when I can take occaſion to write ſo long a Letter from a few hints in a couple of yours. But it

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is impoſſible not to acquire a more dilated Underſtanding by your Correſpondence. After ſo much Philoſophy about the Primitive World, I ſhall trouble you with nothing that paſſes in the preſent; and I deſire this particular favor of you, that in the Letters with which you'l pleaſe to honor me during my Stay in this Solitude (which I hope will be very many) you wou'd not mention a word of News: for there's ſomething in all ſuch Occurrences, which engages us to intereſt our ſelves more than in many Peoples Opinion we are concern'd to do; and yet, according as it goes with publick Affairs, I cannot for my Life refrain from rejoicing, or being angry, or growing ſad like others, which perhaps proceeds from very good Reaſons, but with which I wou'd not willingly be diſquieted here. Still I except from the foregoing Inſtructions all that regards your Family or our other Friends, in whoſe Welfare, and particularly in your own, none can receive more real Satisfaction, than, SIR, your moſt humble and affectionate Servant.

LETTER

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Motion eſſential to Matter; *in Anſwer to ſome Remarks by a noble Friend on the* Confutation of SPINOSA.

Nunc quæ mobilitas ſit reddita Materiai
Corporibus, paucis licet hinc cognoſcere; Memmi. Lucret. l. 2.

1. PARDON me, SIR, if I doubt whether the favorable Character you are pleas'd to beſtow on *the Confutation of* SPINOSA, proceeds from your Kindneſs

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or your Judgment. But what makes me flatter my ſelf that you wrote your genuine Thoughts about the firſt part of that Letter to our worthy Friend, is your making ſome Objections againſt the latter part, wherein I have barely declar'd my Opinion, that *Matter is neceſſarily active as well as extended.* To this you cannot eaſily agree, and neither he nor I can blame you for it, unleſs at the ſame time we wou'd raſhly condemn our ſelves when we were of your mind. But as our Opinion ought to go for nothing without good Reaſons, ſo we admit of no Right from Poſſeſſion, of no Privilege by Preſcription in Philoſophy, how much ſoever we allow it in national Laws or Cuſtoms. Authority is to decide matters of Fact, but not to determine the Truths of Nature. You ventur'd fair, I muſt acknowledg, to make your Obſervations and Objections before I gave any notice or hint of my Arguments: but this very Proceeding declares how untenable you believe my Aſſertion to be, even ſo unguarded and abſurd, that any Perſon cou'd eaſily gueſs at the little that might be plauſibly offer'd for ſuch a Paradox.

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This is but a natural Conſtruction of your meaning, and ſuch Thoughts as People are extremely apt to entertain of any Notion that contradicts the common Belief, eſpecially if ſuch a Belief has continu'd very long in poſſeſſion, and has bin very univerſally receiv'd. In the Anſwer you deſire of me, I ſhall follow the Thread of your own Letter; and take care to be as brief, as the indiſpenſable Law of Perſpicuity will permit. Letter V.

2. YOU take my Meaning very right in urging, that *if Activity ought to enter into the Definition of Matter, it ought likewiſe to expreſs the Eſſence thereof:* for certainly all the Propertys of any thing ſhou'd follow or be knowable from its Definition; elſe the Definition is not diſtinguiſhing and adequate, but confuſe and imperfect. In my Opinion therefore Matter has bin hitherto but half, or rather a third part defin'd by Extenſion, from which alone many of its Modifications can follow by no means; and this is the reaſon, why none of the motive Effects have bin conſider'd as eſſential to it, but adventitious and of a different ſort, becauſe

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not contain'd in any of the Terms of its Definition: whereas Matter being defin'd active as well as extended (to which you may add Solidity, with the incomparable Mr. Locke) then all the motive Effects follow very naturally, and need not be explain'd by any other Cauſe, no more than the Conſequences of Extenſion. Suppoſing it an Error that Motion is extraneous to Matter, you'll own that the ordinary Definitions which are built upon this Suppoſition, have greatly contributed to ſettle it firmly in the Minds of men; they being thus accuſtom'd to deprive Matter of Motion in their Speech and Writing from the beginning, which kept 'em for ever after from revoking it in doubt, but rather making it a ſelf-evident Principle: and you know that ſuch as had deſigns of gaining Reputation by introducing falſe Doctrins that favor'd their Deſigns, or of maintaining their Authority in ſupporting abſurd Perſuaſions already eſtabliſh'd, did make it a ſtanding Rule that *Principles muſt not be diſputed*; and then they canoniz'd for Principles, whatever Maxims they found moſt conducible to their purpoſe. But if Motion be eſſential

tial to Matter, it muſt be likewiſe as eſſential to its Definition. Letter V.

3. I OWN what you next object, that *before ſuch a Definition is made, the neceſſary Activity of Matter ought to be clearly prov'd*, which to do, in the Sequel of this Letter, is my Intention; and to endeavor the recommending of this Definition by the Reaſons I ſhall produce to ſhow that all the Matter in Nature, every Part and Parcel of it, has bin ever in motion, and can never be otherwiſe; that the Particles which lie in the midſt of the moſt ſolid and bulky Rocks, in the heart of Iron Bars or Gold Ingots, are as well in conſtant Action, as thoſe of Fire, or Air, or Water, tho not according to the ſame Determinations, nor in the ſame Degrees, no more than theſe laſt mention'd, compar'd among themſelves: for this Action is equally natural and internal to them all, and to all other Claſſes of Matter in the Univerſe; tho their ſpecifick Motions be ſo various and different, which proceeds from their ſeveral ways of affecting one another. But it's time enough to think of a new Definition, when this eſſen-

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tial Motion is evidently prov'd.

4. YOU once thought it inconceivable, it ſeems, I ſhould ever maintain that *Matter cannot as much as be conceiv'd without an Action of its own, or under ſome Effect of ſuch an Action*; and I ſtill maintain, that Matter can no more be conceiv'd without Motion than without Extenſion, and that the one is as inſeparable from it as the other. Your conceiving Faculty I know to be much more delicate than mine, wherefore I wou'd have you try it a little on this Subject, and then to make me comprehend what Idea you have fram'd of Matter without Action. It muſt be ſomething depriv'd of all Figure or Color, neither heavy nor light, rough or ſmooth, ſweet or ſour, hot or cold, void (in a word) of all ſenſible Qualitys, without Parts, Proportion, or any Relation whatſoever: ſince all theſe depend immediately on Motion, as well as the Forms of all corporeal Beings, their Generation, Succeſſion, and Corruption, by the numberleſs Mixtures, Tranſpoſitions, and other Arrangements of their Parts, all which are the natural and undoubted Effects

Effects of Motion, or rather Motion it ſelf under theſe ſeveral Names and Determinations. The commonly acknowledg'd Diviſibility of Matter is alſo an undeniable Argument that it cannot be conceiv'd without Motion, ſince it is Motion that diverſifies or divides it; which is therefore preſuppos'd as well as Extenſion in the Idea of Diviſibility, and conſequently the one is as eſſential to Matter as the other. How can you conceive that Matter is any thing or a Subſtance, unleſs it be endu'd with Action? How can it be the Subject of Accidents (according to the vulgar Definition) ſince all Accidents are nothing elſe but the ſeveral Determinations of Action in Matter, diverſify'd as they are differently plac'd with relation to our Senſes; but in reality not diſtinct from our Imagination, or from the thing it ſelf wherein they are ſaid to exiſt? Roundneſs is nothing different from the round Body (which is as true of all Figures) for this Roundneſs is not the Name of any real thing, but only a word to expreſs the particular manner of a certain Body. Neither are Hot or Cold, Sounds, Smells, or Colors, ſo much as even the Man-

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Manners or Poſtures of the things themſelves, but the Names we give to their ways of affecting our Imagination; for moſt things are conceiv'd by us with reſpect to our own Bodys, and not to their true Nature: wherefore what is ſweet to one is ſour to another; what is rough to me is ſmooth to you, what is pleaſure to the Healthy is pain to the Sick; tho moſt mens Organs being fram'd very like one another, they are conſequently affected much after the ſame manner, yet ſtill with ſome degrees of Difference. But theſe, and all other Differences in Matter proceeding from ſeveral Changes, or theſe very things being but the Conceptions of different Motions, I think I may warrantably affirm that Matter is never conceiv'd but under ſome Notion of Action, which before I end I deſign to ſhow to be as true of Reſt it ſelf. Now ſtrip me Matter of Motion (if you can) and I undertake before-hand to divine your Conception of it, which muſt be the very ſame with thoſe who try'd ſuch Projects before you: for their *Materia prima* was *quæ neque eſt quid, neque eſt quale, neque eſt quantum, neque quicquam eorum quibus Ens denominatur*;

natur; which is in a great many words to ſay, that it is nothing at all. Letter V.

5. BUT you affirm that *the Extenſion of Matter is very eaſily known, if not ſelf-evident, but not its Activity*; wherein I muſt beg leave to diſſent from you, aſſerting that the one is no leſs eaſy to be known than the other, and neither of 'em doubted or miſtaken, but by ſuch as judg of things from Appearances, Cuſtom, or Authority, without conſulting their own Reaſon, arguing in which Method they may as well prove the Moon to be no bigger than a large Cheſhire Cheeſe: for as the Vulgar believe that there is no Extenſion, where they perceive no viſible Object; ſo thoſe, who wou'd take it ill to be rankt in other things with the Vulgar, yet agree with them in this, thinking that there's no Action, where they can ſee no local or determinate Motion. Experience ſhows that great numbers of Adverſarys are no Argument againſt the Truth of any thing whatſoever. The plaineſt things in the World have bin mighty Secrets for whole Ages; and we know that it's hard to find a thing, where no body dreams

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dreams of looking for it. Have a little patience, SIR, and I may be ſo happy as to be capable of ſhowing you what led all Sects of Philoſophers as well as the Vulgar, to believe the Sluggiſhneſs of Matter, tho divers of the former were aware of its actual univerſal Motion, which from the Prejudice of their Infancy, they were ready to aſcribe to any Cauſe rather than to the right one; and this has very often oblig'd 'em to feign very ill-ſorted and ridiculous Hypotheſes.

6. I APPROVE of your fourth Obſervation (for you know I wou'd not eaſily diſagree with you in any thing) that *many of the moſt learned Philoſophers contend for a Vacuum, which Notion ſeems to be grounded on the Deadneſs or Inactivity of Matter*: to which I add, that ſome of thoſe Philoſophers deny (with the Epicureans) the Void to have any ſubſtantial Extenſion, and will have it to be nothing; while the reſt make it an extended Subſtance, which is neither Body nor Spirit. Theſe Notions have rais'd a world of Diſputes about the nature of Space. The Opinion of a Void is one of the numberleſs erroneous Conſequences

quences of defining Matter only by Extenſion, of making it naturally inactive, and of thinking it divided into real Parts every way independent of one another. On theſe Suppoſitions it is impoſſible there ſhou'd not be a Void; but 'tis as impoſſible that ten thouſand Abſurditys ſhou'd not follow from thence. What we call Parts in Matter, may be prov'd to be but the different Conceptions of its Affections, the diſtinctions of its Modifications; which Parts are therefore only imaginary or relative, but not real and abſolutely divided: for Water, as ſuch, can be generated, divided, and corrupted, increas'd and diminiſh'd; but not when conſider'd as Matter. Letter V.

7. ON this occaſion, to avoid all Ambiguity, 'tis convenient to inform you, that by Bodys I underſtand certain Modifications of Matter, conceiv'd by the Mind as ſo many limited Syſtems, or particular Quantitys mentally abſtracted, but not actually ſeparated from the Extenſion of the Univerſe. We therefore ſay that one Body is bigger or leſs than another, is broken or diſſolv'd, from the multifarious Change of Modifications:

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fications: but we cannot properly ſay that Matters are bigger one than another, becauſe there's but one ſort of Matter in the Univerſe; and if it be infinitely extended, it can have no abſolute Parts independent of one another, Parts and Particles being conceiv'd as I told you juſt now that Bodys were. A world of other words are invented to help our Imagination, like Scaffolds for the Convenience of the Workmen; but which muſt be laid aſide when the Building is finiſh'd, and not be miſtaken for the Pillars or Foundation. Of this ſort are Great and Small, for example, which are but mer Compariſons of the Mind, and not the Names of any poſitive Subjects; as you are Big in reſpect of your little Siſter, but Little in reſpect of an Elephant, and ſhe is Big when compar'd to her Parrot, but very Little when ſhe ſtands by her Mother. Theſe and ſuch words are very ſerviceable when rightly apply'd; yet they are often abus'd, and from relative or modal, are made real, abſolute, and poſitive: ſuch are Bodys, Parts, Particles, Somthing, a certain Being, and the like, which may be well allow'd in the Practice of Life, but never in the Specu-

8. BUT to return to your Objection; others who admitted no real, but only modal and reſpective Parts in Nature, yet cou'd never with all their Subtilty bring any Arguments againſt a Void, but what their Adverſarys cou'd eaſily ruin, becauſe they agreed with them in making Matter inactive. You, that underſtand ſo well the Hiſtory of Philoſophy, know that the Difficultys appear to be equal on both ſides, which has induc'd many to believe that the thing is in its own nature inexplicable, throwing the fault (as they often unjuſtly do) on their own Conceptions, which they find unſatisfy'd; and not on the precarious Suppoſitions of both Partys, which they do not perceive. There is nothing more certain than that of two Contradictorys the one muſt be always true, as the other muſt be always falſe; and tho it be therefore indiſputable that either there is a Void, or that all is full (to uſe their improper Expreſſion) tho it be plain that the Truth is within the narrow Compaſs of theſe two ſhort Propoſitions, yet neither ſide has bin hitherto

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therto able to demonſtrate which of 'em is the true Opinion, becauſe they have both argu'd from a falſe Medium, from which nothing but Falſitys and Abſurditys cou'd naturally follow.

9. BUT if you are once perſuaded, SIR, as I hope you quickly will, that Matter is active as well as extended, all your difficultys about a *Vacuum* muſt fall to the ground. For as thoſe particular or limited Quantitys, which we call ſuch or ſuch Bodys, are but ſeveral Modifications of the general Extenſion of Matter in which they are all contain'd, and which they neither increaſe nor diminiſh: ſo (as an adequate Parallel) all the particular or local Motions of Matter are but the ſeveral Determinations of its general Action, directing it this or that way, by theſe or thoſe Cauſes, in this or that manner, without giving it any Augmentation or Diminution. Indeed in all Treatiſes of the ordinary Laws of Motion, you meet with the ſeveral degrees of Motion that any Body loſes or acquires; but thoſe Laws concern the Quantity of the Action of particular Bodys on one

one another, and not the Action of Matter in general; as particular Quantitys of Matter are meaſur'd by other leſſer Quantitys, but not the Extenſion of the Whole. The Mathematicians compute the Quantitys and Proportions of Motion, as they obſerve Bodys to act on one another, without troubling themſelves about the phyſical Reaſons of what every perſon allows, being a thing which does not always concern them, and which they leave the Philoſophers to explain: tho the latter wou'd ſucceed better in their Reaſons, if they did more acquaint themſelves before-hand with the Obſervations and Facts of the former, as Mr. NEWTON juſtly[1] obſerves. Letter V.

10. THERE is no inſeparable Attribute of Matter, but has number-

[1] In Matheſi inveſtigandæ ſunt virium Quantitates & Rationes illæ, quæ ex conditionibus quibuſcunque poſitis conſequuntur: denique ubi in phyſicam deſcenditur, conferendæ ſunt hæ Rationes cum Phænomenis, ut innoteſcat quænam virium Conditiones ſingulis Corporum attractivorum generibus competant; & tum demum de virium Speciebus, Cauſis, & Rationibus Phyſicis tutius diſputare licebit. *Philoſ. Nat. Princip. Math.* p. 192.

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leſs Modifications proper to it ſelf as well as Extenſion. So has Solidity, ſo has Action; and yet all the Attributes muſt concur in producing the peculiar Modes of each, becauſe they are ſtill but the Conſideration of the ſelf-ſame Matter under different reſpects. To ſay then, as you do after a Croud of Philoſophers, that *if there be no Void, there is conſequently no place for* C *to remove into, nor any Elbow-room for* B *to puſh* C; for you, I repeat it, to ſpeak in this manner, is not only to have the ſame groſs Conception of Space with your Farmers, but alſo to ſuppoſe the Points *B* and *C*, and all or moſt of the Points about them, to be really fixt, and in abſolute Repoſe. But you ſhou'd not run with a multitude to commit Miſtakes, no more than to do evil; and if I ſucceed in proving the natural, eſſential, intrinſick, and neceſſary Action of Matter, then you may eaſily perceive that theſe Objections will be no longer Difficultys, and that all your Circles of contiguous Balls, your Fiſh on the point of moving in the Water, and the reſt of thoſe thred-bare Examples muſt be employ'd on ſome other occaſions; becauſe all theſe

ſuppoſe

ſuppoſe an abſolute Reſt, as well as the Generation of Motion, which is the thing in queſtion; and cou'd it be prov'd, there wou'd be no ſolid anſwering of ſuch Arguments for a *Vacuum*. Letter V.

11. I HINTED ſomething to you before about the abuſe of Words in Philoſophy, and we may inſtance particularly certain Terms invented to very good purpoſe by Mathematicians; but miſunderſtood or perverted by others, and not ſeldom very wrongly apply'd by certain Mathematicians themſelves, which can never fail to happen when abſtracted Notions are taken for real Beings, and then laid down as Principles whereon to build Hypotheſes. Thus the Mathematical Lines, Surfaces, and Points have bin maintain'd to exiſt in reality, and many Concluſions thence deduc'd, tho very unhappily; as that Extenſion was compounded of Points, which is to ſay, that Length, Breadth, and Thickneſs are form'd of what is neither long, nor broad, nor thick, or Meaſure of no Quantity. So the word *Infinite* has bin wonderfully perplex'd;

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leſs Modifications proper to it ſelf as well as Extenſion. So has Solidity, ſo has Action; and yet all the Attributes muſt concur in producing the peculiar Modes of each, becauſe they are ſtill but the Conſideration of the ſelf-ſame Matter under different reſpects. To ſay then, as you do after a Croud of Philoſophers, that *if there be no Void, there is conſequently no place for* C *to remove into, nor any Elbow-room for* B *to puſh* C; for you, I repeat it, to ſpeak in this manner, is not only to have the ſame groſs Conception of Space with your Farmers, but alſo to ſuppoſe the Points *B* and *C*, and all or moſt of the Points about them, to be really fixt, and in abſolute Repoſe. But you ſhou'd not run with a multitude to commit Miſtakes, no more than to do evil; and if I ſucceed in proving the natural, eſſential, intrinſick, and neceſſary Action of Matter, then you may eaſily perceive that theſe Objections will be no longer Difficultys, and that all your Circles of contiguous Balls, your Fiſh on the point of moving in the Water, and the reſt of thoſe thred-bare Examples muſt be employ'd on ſome other occaſions; becauſe all theſe

ſuppoſe

ſuppoſe an abſolute Reſt, as well as the Generation of Motion, which is the thing in queſtion; and cou'd it be prov'd, there wou'd be no ſolid anſwering of ſuch Arguments for a *Vacuum*. Letter V.

11. I HINTED ſomething to you before about the abuſe of Words in Philoſophy, and we may inſtance particularly certain Terms invented to very good purpoſe by Mathematicians; but miſunderſtood or perverted by others, and not ſeldom very wrongly apply'd by certain Mathematicians themſelves, which can never fail to happen when abſtracted Notions are taken for real Beings, and then laid down as Principles whereon to build Hypotheſes. Thus the Mathematical Lines, Surfaces, and Points have bin maintain'd to exiſt in reality, and many Concluſions thence deduc'd, tho very unhappily; as that Extenſion was compounded of Points, which is to ſay, that Length, Breadth, and Thickneſs are form'd of what is neither long, nor broad, nor thick, or Meaſure of no Quantity. So the word *Infinite* has bin wonderfully perplex'd;

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which has given occaſion to a thouſand Equivocations and Errors. Number was made infinite; as if it follow'd, becauſe Units may be added to one another without end, that there actually exiſted an infinite Number. Of this nature are infinite Time, the infinite Cogitation of Man, aſymptot Lines, and a great many other boundleſs Progreſſions, which are infinite only with reſpect to the Operations of our Minds, but not ſo in themſelves: for whatever is really infinite, does actually exiſt as ſuch; whereas what only may be infinite, is very poſitively not ſo.

12. BUT no Word has bin more miſapply'd, nor conſequently has given occaſion to more Diſputes than Space, which is only an abſtracted Notion (as you ſhall perceive hereafter) or the Relation that any thing has to other Beings at a diſtance from it, without any Conſideration of what lies between them, tho they have at the ſame time a real Exiſtence. Thus Place is either the relative Poſition of a thing with reſpect to the circumambient Bodys, or the Room it fills with its own Bulk, and from which it is conceiv'd to exclude

clude all other Bodys, which are but mere Abstractions, the Capacity nothing differing from the Body contain'd: and so Distance is the Measure between any two Bodys, without regard to the things whose Extension is so measur'd. Yet because the Mathematicians had occasion to suppose Space without Matter, as they did Duration without Things, Points without Quantity, and the like; the Philosophers, who cou'd not otherwise account for the Generation of Motion in Matter which they held to be inactive, imagin'd a real Space distinct from Matter, which they held to be extended, incorporeal, immovable, homogeneal, indivisible, and infinite. But this whole Dispute depends on the Action and Infinity of Matter. In the first place, if Matter it self be essentially active, there's no need to help it to Motion by this Invention, nor is there any Generation of Motion. Secondly, if it be infinite, it can have no separate Parts that move independently of one another in crooked or streight Lines, notwithstanding those Modifications which we call particular divisible Bodys. Thirdly, Matter must be likewise

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wiſe homogeneal, if it has Action of it ſelf as well as Solidity or Extenſion, without being divided into Parts. And fourthly, if it be infinite, the Univerſe muſt be without all local Motion, there being no fix'd Points without it, to which it might be ſucceſſively apply'd, nor any place into which it cou'd poſſibly remove.

13. PROCEEDING, SIR, according to the Order of your Remarks, I ſhall briefly endeavor to prove theſe ſeveral Points. I am not inſenſible that I oppoſe a Notion univerſally receiv'd, and that in this particular Article of Space I am ſaid to have the greateſt Man in the world againſt me, who yet cannot grow any thing leſs, tho he ſhou'd happen herein to be miſtaken; ſince the Demonſtrations and Diſcoverys of his unparallel'd Book remain intirely true without it. For my part, I can no more believe an abſolute Space diſtinct from Matter, as the place of it; than that there is an abſolute Time, different from the things whoſe Duration are conſider'd. And yet Mr. NEWTON is thought not only to believe theſe things, but alſo to put them

them both on the ſame foot. *Times and Spaces*, ſays [1] he, *are as it were their own Places, and thoſe of all other things. All the things in the Univerſe are in Time as to the Order of Succeſſion, and in Space as to the Order of Situation. 'Tis eſſential to 'em that they be Places; and to think theſe primary Places can be mov'd, is abſurd. Theſe are therefore abſolute Places, and the Tranſlations from them are the only abſolute Motions.* I am convinc'd that theſe Words are capable of receiving an Interpretation favorable to my Opinion; but I chuſe to cite them in the ſenſe wherein they are commonly underſtood: beſides that his Book (as I ſaid before) is neither way concern'd. Letter V.

14. AS for your alledging (to infer the Inactivity of Matter, as well as a *Vacuum*) that *one Body is heavier or lighter than another of equal Bulk*; you

[1] Tempora & Spatia ſunt ſui-ipſorum & rerum omnium quaſi loca. In Tempore, quoad ordinem Succeſſionis, in Spatio, quoad ordinem Situs, locantur univerſa. De illorum eſſentia eſt ut ſint loca, & loca primaria moveri abſurdum eſt. Hæc ſunt igitur abſoluta loca, & ſolæ Tranſlationes de his locis ſunt abſoluti Motus. *P.* 7.

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muſt ſuppoſe that Levity and Gravity are not mere Relations, the Compariſons of certain Situations and external Preſſures; but that they are real Beings, or abſolute and inherent Qualitys, which is now by every body exploded, and contrary to all that you know your ſelf of Mechanicks. It may not be difficult to perſuade even Perſons of a moderate Capacity, that there cou'd be no Levity or Gravity in the ſuppos'd Chaos, and that theſe Qualitys wholly depend on the Conſtitution and Fabrick of the Univerſe; which is to ſay, that they are the Conſequences of the World in actual Being, and the neceſſary Effects of its preſent Order, but not eſſential Attributes of Matter, the ſame Body becoming heavy or light by turns, according as it is plac'd among other Bodys, and there being nothing better known, than that many things are not ſometimes in a ſtate of Levity or Gravity. To imagine that any Parcel of Matter has Levity or Gravity of it ſelf, becauſe you ſee thoſe Effects in the Fabrick of the World; or to deduce it from the common Laws of Gravitation, is not only to imagine Matter alike

alike affected in all Places, but that the Wheels, and Springs, and Chains of a Watch, can perform all thoſe Motions ſeparately which they do together. And yet it was from ſuch falſe Suppoſitions, that the Philoſophers, in their ſeveral Formations of the World, invented the Fable of the four Elements, orderly placing themſelves according to their different degrees of Gravity and Levity; the Earth undermoſt or in the Center, next to that the Water, then the Seat of the Air, and uppermoſt of all the Fire. All Sorts and Sects of People have bin ſuperſtitiouſly fond of this primary Chaos, a Notion as confus'd and monſtrous as the Import of the Name, and built in every ſtep on Suppoſitions that are not only arbitrary, but utterly falſe and chimerical: ſuch is the groſs Conception of the Number and Unmixedneſs of the four Elements, drawn from the moſt compounded Bodys in the world; ſuch is the Levity and Gravity of the dancing Particles; and ſuch the Separation of the Seeds of things (as they ſpeak) which without ſuch Levity and Gravity cou'd not be perform'd, nor indeed on theſe very Conditions, without

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without an Almighty Architect, which they did not always take care to provide, or furniſh'd him with ſuch wretched Tools and Contrivance, as ſhow'd the Meanneſs of their own Underſtanding, the ſole Model by which they form'd him. Such a precarious Suppoſition (in a word) is Matter's having bin at any time in this Confuſion, without aſcertaining how long or for what reaſon, with a thouſand more the like Abſurditys, which every man may eaſily repreſent to himſelf from theſe few Inſtances. This may alſo ſerve for an Example, how little ſtreſs is to be laid on univerſal Conſent, or rather on any epidemical and common Error that makes pretences to that Name.

15. BUT not to ramble into Digreſſions, tho never ſo natural, you own that *moſt Bodys are in actual Motion, which can be no Argument that they have bin always ſo, or that there are not others in abſolute Repoſe.* I grant that ſuch a Conſequence does not neceſſarily follow, tho the thing in it ſelf be true. But however, it may not be amiſs to conſider, how far this actual

actual Motion reaches and is allow'd, before we come to treat of Reſt. Letter V.

Tho the Matter of the Univerſe be every where the ſame, yet, according to its various Modifications, it is conceiv'd to be divided into numberleſs particular Syſtems, Vortexes, or Whirlpools of Matter; and theſe again are ſubdivided into other Syſtems greater or leſs, which depend on one another, as every one on the Whole, in their Centers, Texture, Frame, and Coherence. Our Sun (for example) is the Center of one of thoſe bigger Syſtems, which contains a great many leſſer ones within the Sphere of its Activity, as all the Planets that move about it: and theſe are ſubdivided into yet leſſer Syſtems that depend on them, as his Satellites wait upon Jupiter, and the Moon on the Earth; the Earth again is divided into the Atmoſphere, Ground, Water, and other principal Parts; theſe again into Men, Birds, Beaſts, Trees, Plants, Fiſhes, Worms, Inſects, Stones, Mettals, and a thouſand other differences. Now as all theſe depend in a Link on one another, ſo their Matter (to ſpeak in the uſual Language) is mutually reſolv'd into each other: for

Earth,

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Earth, and Water, and Air, and Fire, are not only cloſely blended and united, but likewiſe interchangeably tranſform'd in a perpetual Revolution; Earth becoming Water, Water Air, Air Æther, and ſo back again in Mixtures without End or Number. The Animals we deſtroy contribute to preſerve us, till we are deſtroy'd to preſerve other things, and become Graſs, or Plants, or Water, or Air, or ſomething elſe that helps to make other Animals, and they one another, or other Men; and theſe again turn into Stone, or Wood, or Mettals, or Minerals, or Animals again, or become Parts of all theſe and of a great many other Things, Animals and Vegetables daily conſuming and devouring each other; ſo true it is that every thing lives by the Deſtruction of another. All the Parts of the Univerſe are in this conſtant Motion of deſtroying and begetting, of begetting and deſtroying: and the greater Syſtems are acknowledg'd to have their ceaſleſs Movements as well as the ſmalleſt Particles, the very central Globes of the Vortexes turning about their own Axis; and every Particle in the Vortex gravitating towards the Center. Our Bodys, however we may flatter our ſelves,

ſelves, differ nothing from thoſe of other Creatures, but like them receive Increaſe or Diminution by Nutrition and Evacuation, by Accretion, Tranſpiration, and ſeveral other ways, giving ſome Parts of ours to other Bodys, and receiving again of theirs, not altogether the ſame yeſterday as to day, nor to continue the ſame to morrow, being alive in a perpetual Flux like a River, and in the total Diſſolution of our Syſtem at death to become Parts of a thouſand other things at once; our Carcaſes partly mixing with the Duſt and Water of the Earth, partly exhal'd and evaporated into the Air, flying to ſo many different places, mixing and incorporating with innumerable things. Letter V.

16. NO Parts of Matter are ty'd to any one Figure or Form, loſing and changing their Figures and Forms continually, that is, being in perpetual Motion, clipt, or worn, or ground to pieces, or diſſolv'd by other Parts, acquiring their Figures, and theſe theirs, and ſo on inceſſantly; Earth, Air, Fire, and Water, Iron, Wood, and Marble, Plants and Animals, being rarefy'd or condens'd,

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condens'd, or liquify'd or congeal'd, or diſſolv'd or coagulated, or any other way reſolv'd into one another. The whole Face of the Earth exhibits thoſe Mutations every minute to our Eyes, nothing continuing one hour numerically the ſame; and theſe Changes being but ſeveral kinds of Motion, are therefore the inconteſtable Effects of ſome univerſal Action. But the Changes in the Parts make no Change in the Univerſe: for it is manifeſt that the continual Alterations, Succeſſions, Revolutions, and Tranſmutations of Matter, cauſe no Acceſſion or Diminution therein, no more than any Letter is added or loſt in the Alphabet by the endleſs Combinations and Tranſpoſitions thereof into ſo many different Words and Languages: for a thing no ſooner quits one Form than it puts on another, leaving as it were the Theater in a certain dreſs, and appearing again in a new one, which produces a perpetual Youthfulneſs and Vigor, without any Decay or Decrepitneſs of the World, as ſome have fooliſhly imagin'd, contrary not only to Reaſon, but to Experience; the World, with all the Parts and Kinds thereof, continuing

tinuing at all times in the ſame condition. The great Syſtems of the Univerſe being ſubdivided into gradual and leſſer Syſtems of Matter, the Individuals of the latter do periſh indeed, tho they are not annihilated, continuing only a certain time in their particular Forms, according to the Strength or Weakneſs of their Diſpoſition, Structure, or Conſtitution, which we call the natural age or time of ſuch a thing; yet if this Conſtitution, before its ordinary Period, be deſtroy'd by more prevalent circumambient Motions, in ſuch caſes we commonly call it Violence or Accident, as that a murder'd young man is dead before his time. But the Species ſtill continues by Propagation, notwithſtanding the Decay of the Individuals; and the Death of our Bodys, is but Matter going to be dreſt in ſome new Form: the Impreſſions may vary, but the Wax continues ſtill the ſame, and indeed Death is in effect the very ſame thing with our Birth; for as to die is only to ceaſe to be what we formerly were, ſo to be born is to begin to be ſomthing which we were not before. E'er I leave this Head, I beg

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Letter V. beg your pardon, SIR, if I take notice to you, that considering the numberless successive Generations that have inhabited this Globe, returning at Death into the common Mass of the same, scattering and mixing with all the other Parts thereof; and joining to this, the incessant river-like Flowing and Transpiration of Matter every moment from the Bodys of Men while they live, as well as their daily Nourishment, Inspiration of Air, and other Additions of Matter to their Bulk: I say, considering these things, it seems to be probable that there is no Particle of Matter on the face of the whole Earth, which has not bin a Part of Man. Nor is this Reasoning confin'd only to our Species, but remains as true of every Order of Animals or Plants, or any other Beings; since they have bin all resolv'd into one another by numberless and ceasless Revolutions, so that nothing is more certain than that every material Thing is all Things, and that all Things are but one.

17. THUS far you allow a constant Motion in Things from sensible Effects.

Effects. You ſay that the Particles of Air, Water, Fire, Æther, Vapors, Exhalations, are without all queſtion in perpetual Motion. You confeſs the Motion of the imperceptible little Bodys that flow from all greater viſible Bodys, which by their Size, Figure, Number, and Motion, operate on our Senſes, and produce the ſeveral Senſations and Ideas we have of Colors, Taſtes, Smells, Heat, Cold, and the like. But you appeal at the ſame time to my Senſes, that *there are ſome Bodys in abſolute Reſt, as well as others in abſolute Motion*; and you inſtance Rocks, Iron, Gold, Lead, Timber, and ſuch other things as do not ſuddenly change their Situation without ſome external Force. To this I anſwer, that your Reaſon, and not your Senſes are the true Judges in this caſe; tho I own that your Senſes can never deceive you, if you call your Reaſon to their Aſſiſtance: and to theſe in conſult together I fear not likewiſe to appeal, as to thoſe very Examples you have alledg'd. But you muſt always diſtinguiſh between the internal Energy, Autokineſy, or eſſential Action of all Matter, without which it cou'd be capable of

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no particular Alteration or Diviſion; and the external local Motion or Changes of Place, which are but the various Modifications of the eſſential Action as their Subject; the particular Motions being determin'd by other more prevalent Motions, to be direct or circular, faſt or ſlow, continu'd or interrupted, according to the occurrent, ſubſequent, or circumambient Motions of other Bodys; no part of Matter being without its own internal Energy, however thus determin'd by the neighboring Parts according as their particular Determination is ſtronger or weaker, yields or reſiſts; and theſe again continue to be vary'd after ſome other manner by the next; and ſo every thing proceeds in endleſs Changes, that is (as I maintain) in perpetual Motion. Now all the local Motions imaginable being acknowledg'd Accidents, increaſing, altering, diminiſhing, and periſhing, without the Deſtruction of the Subject which they modify, or in which they exiſt, this Subject cannot be wholly imaginary, a mere abſtracted Notion, but ſomething real and poſitive. Extenſion cannot be this Subject, ſince the Idea of Extenſion does not neceſ-

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ſarily infer any Variety, Alteration, or Motion; and therefore (as I ſaid juſt now) it muſt be Action, ſince all thoſe Motions are but the different Modifications of Action, as all particular Bodys or Quantitys are but the different Modifications of Extenſion. Of Solidity or Impenetrability I ſhall put you in mind in its due place, and ſhow how theſe three eſſential Attributes or Propertys are inſeparable, and do co-operate. Letter V.

18. BUT not to forget the Appeal to our Senſes, wou'd not you believe with the Vulgar that the Stars are no bigger than ordinary Tapers, that the Sun and Moon are no more than a Foot or two in breadth, if your Reaſon had not computed the Diſtance between your Eyes and thoſe Bodys, and meaſur'd their real Bulk by their Appearances in ſuch a diſtance, with the other proper Arguments which I need not repeat to one that knows 'em ſo well? Is it not the ſame thing as to the diſtinguiſhing the fixt Stars from the Planets, and underſtanding the true Motion of the latter, which is very different from what the Senſes exhibit? I will not deſcend ſo low as a

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ſtreight Stick appearing crooked in the Water, or the Colors on the Neck of a Dove; nor ſoar ſo high as the Heat, Cold, Reliſhes, and Odors, that are not in the things themſelves, which we denominate from theſe Senſations. But to come home to the Subject we have in hand; is not local Motion it ſelf ſometimes ſo ſlow, that it is not perceiv'd by our Senſes, no diſtinguiſhable Removal from one Point to another, tho the Motion goes conſtantly on all this while, and that we are convinc'd of it at laſt by undoubted Effects and viſible Intervals, as in the Hand of a Clock or the Shadow of a Dyal? And ſo it is in Motions that are extremely ſwift, where no Succeſſion is diſtinctly obſerv'd, as in the Paſſage of a Bullet, or the like. To judg of the Body of a Man or any other Animal by the external Surface, it wou'd ſeem to have as little internal local Motion (not to ſpeak now of its inſeparable Action) as Lead, or Gold, or Stone; nor wou'd we make a different Judgment of any Tree or Plant. And yet unleſs every Particle of a Tree were in motion, it cou'd neither receive Augmentation when it grows, nor Diminution when it decays. Your Skill

in Anatomy, join'd to common Experience, will not let you question but that all the Particles of Animals are in perpetual Motion as well as those of Plants, growing, decaying, transpiring, dissolving, corrupting, becoming fat or lean, hot or cold, tho the Man sits still, or the Beast is asleep, or the Tree stands fixt in its place. The Circulation of the Blood and Sap to every imaginable Part, are now no Secrets in Natural Philosophy. Nor is Iron, Stone, Gold, or Lead, more void of this internal Motion, than those they call fluid Bodys: for otherwise they cou'd never undergo those Alterations which Air, or Fire, or Water, or any thing else produces in them. But tho by their being reduc'd into these Forms from a precedent different State, tho by their continual wearing, and final Change of Figure, 'tis certain that their Parts are always in motion, yet they are not so easily nor quickly determin'd by other circumambient Motions (tho there are that do it very suddenly) to change their Form or Situation perceptibly to our Senses; which made People imagine that they had no Motion at all, nor any peculiar Determinations. Letter V.

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19. NEVERTHELESS the very remaining of ſuch Bodys in one place is a real Action, the Efforts and Reſiſtance of this Parcel being equal for ſome time to the determining Motions of the neighboring Bodys that act upon it, and that will not ſuffer it to paſs certain Bounds; which is eaſily underſtood from what I have already no leſs copiouſly than plainly ſaid of the numberleſs ſucceſſive Determinations of Motion, of which this is one kind, and call'd by the People Reſt, to diſtinguiſh that State of Body from the local Motions that are viſible. A Body that deſcends by Gravity or the ſtronger Impulſe of other Bodys, as its own Impulſe is ſtronger than the Determinations that yield to it on the way, is no leſs in Action that it is reſiſted from advancing further by the yet ſtronger Reſiſtance of the Earth, and hinder'd from going back by an equal Preſſure from the Bodys behind it, than a Ship is without Action, if the Force of the Wind blowing towards the mouth of the River, be equal to that of the Tide flowing towards the Spring of it: for let either of

of theſe get the better of the other, and the Ship ſails. But all this while the Ship was depriv'd only of one ſort of Motion, and not of all Effort or Action, no more than Iron, or Lead, or Gold, whoſe Parts, by their own internal Motion, and by the Motions of the circumambient Bodys, are perpetually growing and increaſing, or wearing, moldring, decaying, changing, and periſhing in ſome other manner to us imperceptible; till by the Ruſt or Tarniſh on their Surface, by the Augmentation or Diminution of their Quantity, the Alteration of their Form or Figure, or by ſome other ſenſible Effects, we are intirely convinc'd of it at laſt. Since Reſt therefore is but a certain Determination of the Motion of Bodys, a real of Action of Reſiſtance between equal Motions, 'tis plain that this is no abſolute Inactivity among Bodys, but only a relative Repoſe with reſpect to other Bodys that ſenſibly change their place. Letter V.

20. BUT the Vulgar taking local Motion (as they do all other Relations) for a real Being, have thought Reſt a Privation, or that Motion was

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Action, and that Reſt was a Paſſion; whereas every Motion is as well a Paſſion in reſpect of the Body that gave it the laſt Determination, as it is an Action compar'd to the Body that it determines next. But the turning of theſe and ſuch Words from a relative to an abſolute Signification, has occaſion'd moſt of the Errors and Diſputes on this Subject. However the beſt Philoſophers and Mathematicians, notwithſtanding their making Motion extraneous and Reſt eſſential to Matter, have fairly acknowledg'd the actual conſtant Motion of every Part; being oblig'd to this by the irreſiſtible Evidence of Reaſon and Experience. They grant that the ſame inceſſant Changes and Motions appear in the Bodys under ground, as in thoſe above it; which is confirm'd not only by the nature of the ſeveral Beds of Earth in Mines and Quarrys, by the generation of Metals and Minerals, but alſo by the Appearances of all other ſubterranean Bodys and Foſſils. They own that all the Phænomena of Nature muſt be explain'd by Motion, by the Action of all things on one another, according to mechanick Principles. And 'tis ſo in effect that they

they account for all the Diverſitys in Nature, for the elementary and ſenſible Qualitys; for all the Forms, Figures, Mixtures, or other Modifications and Alterations of Matter. Thoſe who think the moſt truly and nicely therefore on local Motion, conſider the Points from which and to which the Body moves, not as in abſolute Repoſe, but only as quieſcent with reſpect to the Motion of that Body: and tho Mr. NEWTON be deem'd an Advocate for extended incorporeal Space, yet he declares that perhaps no one [1] Body is in abſolute Reſt, that perhaps no [2] immovable bodily Center is to be found in Nature; and in one place he expreſſes himſelf in theſe [3] Words: *The Vulgar attribute Reſiſtance to quieſcent, and Impulſe to movent Bodys; but Motion and Reſt, as commonly conceiv'd, are only reſpectively*

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[1] Fieri enim poteſt ut nullum re vera quieſcat Corpus, ad quod loca motuſque referantur. Pag. 7.

[2] Hactenus expoſui motus Corporum attractorum ad Centrum immobile, quale tamen vix extat in rerum Natura. Pag. 162.

[3] Vulgus Reſiſtentiam quieſcentibus & Impetum moventibus tribuit; ſed Motus & Quies, uti vulgo conci-

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tively diſtinguiſh'd from one another, nor are thoſe things always in true Repoſe, which are vulgarly conſider'd as quieſcent. Thus far that deſervedly admir'd Author, who has ſeen the fartheſt of all Men living into the actual State of Matter; and indeed all Phyſicks ought to be denominated from the Title he has given to the firſt Book of his Principles, viz. *of the Motion of Bodys.*

21. I NEED not ask your pardon, SIR, for being ſo particular, both becauſe it was your requeſt to me, and for the ſake of thoſe who are ignorant of many things which I might ſuppoſe to you, and to whom you might nevertheleſs ſhow my Letter, or ſpeak of my Opinion. I think after all that has bin ſaid, I may now venture to conclude that *Action is eſſential to Matter,* ſince it muſt be the real Subject of all thoſe Modifications which are call'd local Motions, Changes, Differences, or Diverſitys; and

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concipiuntur, reſpectu ſolo diſtinguuntur ab invicem, neque ſemper vere quieſcunt quæ vulgo tanquam quieſcentia ſpectantur. Pag. 2.

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principally becauſe abſolute Repoſe, on which the Inactivity or Lumpiſhneſs of Matter was built, is entirely deſtroy'd, and prov'd no where to exiſt. This vulgar Error of abſolute Reſt was occaſion'd by the Appearances of heavy, hard, and bulky Bodys; and ſeeing they did not change that ſtrong Determination (which the People did not conceive to be an Action) but by much ſtronger Determinations, whoſe Effects were obvious to their Senſes, they concluded firſt that there was an abſolute Reſt, and ſecondly that all Bodys wou'd continue in that State without ſome foreign Mover, which they imagin'd not to be Matter, ſince all Bodys were Matter, and that what was natural to the Parts, was ſo to the Whole. At leaſt, the Philoſophers made ſuch Inferences from the Notion of Reſt, which they learnt from their Education, and from the ſole Judgment of their Senſes: for none is born a Divine, Philoſopher, or Politician, and therefore every man at the beginning ſtands on the ſame ground with the Vulgar, receiving the ſame Prejudices and Impreſſions; and however he may extricate himſelf from many Errors, yet if he leaves any in poſſeſſion

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poſſeſſion unexamin'd, he ſhall always reaſon himſelf into Contradictions or Abſurditys from that Principle, tho otherwiſe juſtly reckon'd a wiſe and able Perſon. Since therefore there is no ſuch abſolute Reſt in thoſe Examples you have brought, and that on the contrary every other Parcel of Matter, as well as theſe, are in abſolute Motion, you ſhou'd not ſide with ſuch Philoſophers, as were either the moſt ſuperſtitious or the leaſt perſpicacious; nor ought you to argue at all from a vulgar Error: but ſeeing that every Part of Matter is prov'd to be always in motion, you ſhou'd conclude that Motion is eſſential to the Whole, for the ſame reaſon that you think Extenſion to be ſo; becauſe every Part is extended. To all that will think without Biaſs, Experience renders theſe Caſes parallel, and Reaſon evidently demonſtrates it.

22. I HAVE induſtriouſly omitted to ſpeak any thing of the relative Motions of all thoſe Bodys conceiv'd to be in Repoſe; and I ſhall but hint them now, to put you in mind that at the ſame time they ceaſe not to be abſolute. Every thing in the Globe of our Earth (which

(which is as true of all the other Planets) partakes of its conſtant Motion; for the Motion of the Whole is but the Sum total of the Motion of the Parts; which is not only plain from the Reaſon of the thing it ſelf, but alſo from the proportionable Force that is neceſſary either to impreſs a new Determination on any Body, or to ſtop the Determination it has already acquir'd, for the one cannot be leſs than the other. Tho all the aſſignable Parts of a Ball in Motion are at reſt with reſpect to one another, or to their places in the Ball; yet none will ſay, but that they are all in actual Motion as Parts of the Ball, and in relation to every thing without it. So a Paſſenger ſhares the Motion of a Ship under Sail, to ſay nothing of the ſpecific Motions of his human Syſtem; tho he's conceiv'd to be at reſt, with regard to the place wherein he ſits, or to the other Parts of the Ship, which, notwithſtanding the Motion of the Whole, keep the ſame Diſtance and Poſition with reſpect to him. I have likewiſe dropt but a word (in the fifteenth Paragraph) of the Centripetal Force, by which all the Bodys of the Earth are drawn or tend

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tend towards its Center (as all others to the proper Centers of their Motions) nor have I mention'd a ſyllable of the centrifugal Force, by which they endeavour to recede from the Center in a ſtreight Line, if they are not otherwiſe determin'd by ſome ſtronger Cauſe: as a Stone whirl'd about in a Sling is detain'd in its Orbit by the Leather, the String of which, being ſtretcht by the Motion of the Stone, is contracted towards the Stone it ſelf, by its Efforts to fly off directly in every point of the Circle it deſcribes; and at the ſame time it is equally contracted towards the man's Hand; whence it follows, that the Center approaches as much to the Stone as the Stone does to the Center, which yet does not always happen for many reaſons. Notable Effects depend on theſe Forces the nearer they are to being equal, or the ſtronger one of 'em is than the other; wherefore the centripetal being much greater than the centrifugal Force of the Parts of the Earth, taking in likewiſe the Atmoſphere, is one main reaſon that it never loſes any of its Matter, and that it always continues of the ſame Bulk or Dimenſions, the centripetal Force of Gravity that detains

tains the several Bodys in their Orbit, being considerably stronger than the centrifugal Force of Motion, by which they strive to fly off in the Tangent. Let the Causes of these Forces be what they will, they are unanswerable Arguments to my purpose of a perpetual Motion in all things. But I shall write no more concerning them, lest I insensibly ingage my self in a Dispute with you about the nature of Gravity, as whether the weight of Bodys be always proportionable to their Quantity of Matter; that is, whether there be more Matter as there is more weight in a cubic Foot of Lead than in a cubic Foot of Cork, which, I know, you maintain after no contemptible Philosophers: or whether the same Quantity of Matter be contain'd in the same Dimensions of Mercury, Gold, Silver, Iron, Lead, Earth, Water, Cork, or Air, tho their specific Gravitys be so different from each other, proceeding partly from external Pressures, and partly from those internal Structures or Modifications which give their common Matter those various Forms that constitute their Species, and are distinguish'd by their Gravity, as they are by their Figures, Colors,

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lors, Tastes, Smells, or any other Affections, arising from their peculiar Disposition, from the Action of other Bodys, or from our Senses and Imagination. This is my own Opinion, whatever be my reasons for it: besides, that were Gravity an essential Attribute, and not a particular Mode of Matter, the same things wou'd equally ponderate in all places and circumstances, as they are every where equally solid or equally extended; nor wou'd they vary in the Retardation or Acceleration of their Descent in various Distances from the Center. With me therefore Gravity infers no Vacuum (as I told you before in the fourteenth Paragraph) and is but one of the many Modes of Action, however this Determination happens, which at present we shall not examine; its real Existence being deny'd by no body, and the Quantitys and Proportions of Motion proceeding from Gravity, or the mutual Action of particular Bodys in this respect, being to be calculated from Fact and Observation, be their physical Causes what you please. For the same reasons I shall pass by the Attraction of the Planets, their gravitating, or acting any other way on one

one another; as 'tis certain not only from the Influence of the Sun, the Tides occaſion'd by the Moon, and by ſeveral other Arguments, that they very remarkably affect each other, according to their Magnitude, Figure, Diſtances, and Poſition. Letter V.

23. THAT Motion is adventitious to Matter, that it has actually ſeparate and independent Parts, that there is a Void or incorporeal Space, are not the only Miſtakes occaſion'd by the Notion of abſolute Reſt. For thoſe Philoſophers who were the leaſt ſuperſtitious, and who look'd the moſt narrowly into the Nature of things, have taught that all Matter was animated, as well every Particle of Air, or Water, or Wood, or Iron, or Stone, as a Man, a Brute, or the whole Maſs together; being naturally led into this Conceit, becauſe having learnt from others that Matter was eſſentially inactive (from which Prejudice they did not take care to free themſelves) and yet finding by Experience all and every Particle of Matter to be in motion, and believing likewiſe that Life was different from the organiz'd Body, they concluded that the Cauſe of this

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Motion was ſome Being intimately join'd to Matter however modify'd, and that it was inſeparable from the ſame. But this pretended Animation is utterly uſeleſs, ſince Matter has Motion of it ſelf, and that there is no real Repoſe. Theſe enlivening Philoſophers were divided into ſeveral Claſſes; ſo many Expedients are neceſſary to put ſome face of Truth upon Error! Some of 'em, as the Stoics, held this Life to be a Soul of the World, co-extended with Matter, inſinuated and infus'd thro the whole and every part thereof, being it ſelf eſſentially corporeal, tho infinitely finer than all other Bodys, which, in reſpect of its Subtilty and Action, were reputed extremely groſs: but the univerſal Soul of the Platoniſts was immaterial, and a pure Spirit. Others, as STRATO of Lampſacus, and the modern Hylozoicks, taught that the Particles of Matter had Life, and alſo a degree of Thought, or a direct Perception without any Reflection; to which HERACLITUS of old, and lately SPINOSA, added Underſtanding or reflex Acts, without ever removing the Difficultys apparently offering themſelves againſt ſuch a precarious Hypotheſis,

ſis, not as much as ſhowing (tho this Conſciouſneſs were granted) how the ſeveral reaſoning Particles cou'd agree together to form the ſame Body or Syſtem, or to ſeparate or join ſo regularly on certain occaſions, without any jarring or change of Opinions, as to their being better or worſe in other places, ſingle or in numerous Company; nor how, tho all the Particles of a Man have Senſe and Underſtanding, he finds but one ſuch Faculty in himſelf, and that Faculty exerting its Operations only in one place. No leſs romantic is the plaſtic Life of other Philoſophers, which (according to its modern Reviver, the univerſally learned Dr. CUDWORTH) is not material, but an inferior ſort of Spirit without Senſation or Thought, yet endu'd with a vital Operation and Energy; theſe Plaſtics ſeeming to differ with the Hylozoics only about words, tho pretending a mighty Diſagreement, to keep clear, I ſuppoſe, of the abſurd or invidious Conſequences charg'd on their Opinions; as the Janſeniſts and Calviniſts treat one another about Predeſtination, in which Doctrin they certainly mean the ſame thing, notwithſtanding the nice diſtinctions of the

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Janſeniſts. But all theſe Hypotheſes are ſo many viſible Shifts to account for the actual Motion of inactive Matter, and to avoid bringing God every moment on the ſtage, and ſetting him awork on all occaſions, nay in all Actions without diſtinction, and this too by an abſolute and unavoidable Neceſſity. Thus far of ſuch as provided external or foreign Movers of Matter; and as for thoſe who allow'd it naturally inactive, but aſſign'd no Cauſe for its Motion, as ANAXIMANDER, ANAXIMENES, and ſome other Antients; nor any Cauſe either of its Motion or Cogitation, as SPINOSA among the Moderns: theſe, I ſay, are ſo unphiloſophical as to deſerve no further Hiſtory, and have always afforded matter of Triumph to the Stoics, Spiritualiſts, and Plaſtics, or reckon 'em by what other Names or Diſtributions you may think more proper.

24. BUT the moſt univerſal Miſtake proceeding from the ſuppos'd Inactivity of Matter is the Notion of an infinite, extended, and yet incorporeal Space. Becauſe great matters are built on this ſubſtantial Space, and that men

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of great Name and Merit have countenanc'd it by their Approbation, I ſhall give you the Hiſtory of this Opinion, as I have done of the reſt; tho I might juſtly neglect it after having prov'd Matter to be eſſentially active, and that its general Motion was the immediate Subject of all the particular motive Determinations, as Extenſion is the immediate Subject of the ſeveral Figures and Quantitys: for it was likewiſe to help ſluggiſh Matter to Motion, that this Space (as the room of its Action) was principally devis'd; but Matter not being inactive, nor wanting to have Motion continually impreſt by an external Agent, Space may be exterminated from Philoſophy, as uſeleſs and imaginary. Extenſion is granted on all hands to be infinite, for it cannot be terminated by Inextenſion; and the Demonſtrations for this are ſo univerſally known and acknowledg'd, that I ſhall not trouble you with repeating them. No leſs infinite is Matter, when conceiv'd as an extended thing, for you can imagin no bounds of it, to which you may not add more Extenſion infinitely; and therefore if it be not actually infinite, its Finiteneſs muſt proceed

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from some other Cause besides its Extension. Those who maintain'd Matter to be finite upon philosophical grounds, imagin'd it to be inactive, divisible into Parts independent and separate, with vacant Interstices; which Parts were heavy or light of themselves, and had various Figures, as well as degrees of Motion, when violently forc'd out of their natural state of Rest. This necessarily led 'em to suppose finite Extensions, at the same time that they allow'd another Extension, which was infinite. And then they cou'd not but make those Extensions essentially different in other respects; the one immovable, impenetrable, indivisible, unchangeable, homogeneal, incorporeal, and all-containing; the other movable, penetrable, divisible, changeable, heterogeneal, corporeal, and contain'd; the one betokening infinite Space, and the other particular Bodys. But this whole Distinction is built on supposing the thing in question, and by the equivocal Signification of the words Place, Whole, Parts, Particles, Divisibility, or the like; and therefore after they took it for granted that Matter was finite, divided into Parts, that it wanted Motion from elsewhere,

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and had a void Place wherein to act, then they establish'd this Wheel within a Wheel, or one Extension penetrating another, as if Modes were penetrated by their Subject. But all these Suppositions being (as I have often told you) only the Consequences of the main Supposition, that Matter was inactive, and the contrary of this or the essential Motion of it being already demonstrated, there is no reason not to think Matter infinite, and that, as Nothing has no Propertys, so that the acknowledg'd infinite Extension belongs to this infinite Subject, which is infinitely modify'd in its Motion, Extension, and other inseparable Attributes. Letter V.

25. I MIGHT conclude here, SIR; but to put this matter beyond all doubt with you, I shall be at a little more pains to show how all these things, which they attribute to Space and Body as their essential Differences, do wholly belong without any contradiction to infinite Matter: for I grant that these Propertys have a real Existence, and tho seemingly opposite, they are but the Affections of the same Subject under various Considerations.

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When Bodys are conceiv'd finite, movable, diviſible, at reſt, heavy or light, under different Figures, and in various Situations; then we abſtract the Modifications from the Subject, or, if you will, the Parts from the Whole, and imagine proper Boundarys to certain Portions of Matter, which ſeparate and diſtinguiſh them from all the reſt, whence came originally the Notion of a Void: but when we conſider infinite Space as impenetrable, immovable, indiviſible, the place which receives all Bodys, wherein they move and are contain'd, it ſelf being void of all Change, Form, or Figure; then, on the contrary, we abſtract the infinite Subject from the finite Modifications, or the Whole from the Parts. Now let's apply this Doctrin in particular Inſtances. Since nothing can be added to Infinite nor taken away from it, the Univerſe can neither increaſe nor diminiſh, there being no place without it to which you may remove what you divide from it, or from which you may bring what you add to it: conſequently it is immovable and indiviſible; and alſo without all Figure, ſince it has no Bounds or Limits;

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and immenſe, ſince no finite Quantity, tho never ſo often repeated, can equal or meaſure its Extenſion. Therefore when we ſay, that Space is all-containing, we mean it of infinite Matter, to diſtinguiſh the Whole from the Parts, which yet are not different from the Whole. When we ſay it permeates all things, we abſtract the Extenſion of Matter from its other Propertys; and ſo we do, when we ſay it's incorporeal, not then conſidering it otherwiſe than as the Mathematicians in Points, or Lines, or Surfaces. When we affirm it is one, we mean that it is infinite and indiviſible; for there's but one Univerſe, tho there may be numberleſs Worlds. When we ſay it is the Place of all things, we ſignify that it is the Subject of its own Modifications, whether Motions, Figures, or others. When we ſay it's homogeneal, we mean that Matter is ever the ſame, be the Modifications of it never ſo various. And laſtly, when we ſay that finite Bodys cannot exiſt without an infinite Space, we only ſay that they cannot be unleſs they are; for their own Solidity or their Reſpect to other things is all their Place, abſtracting from

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from the Universe of which they are Parts, of whose infinite Motion, Solidity, and Extension, they finitely partake: for infinite Matter is the real Space and Place, as well as the real Subject of its own particular Portions and Modifications.

26. YOU may now perceive how this Notion of absolute Space was form'd, partly by gratuitous Suppositions, as that Matter was finite, inactive, and divisible; partly, by abstracting Extension, the most obvious Property of Matter, without considering the other Propertys, or their absolute Connection in the same Subject, tho each of 'em may be mentally abstracted from the rest, which is of singular use to Mathematicians on several occasions: provided such Abstractions be never taken for Realitys, and made to exist out of the Subjects from which they are abstracted, no more than plac'd in another Subject uncertain or unknown. Matter is often abstracted from Motion, as Motion is from Matter, so are Solidity and Matter, Motion and Extension, Extension and Solidity, Solidity and Motion; each of these may be and is taken by it self without any

any Consideration of the rest, whereas in reality the Motion of Matter depends on its Solidity and Extension, and so all of 'em inseparably on one another. But the Defenders of Space, after abstracting Extension from Matter, then distinguish'd between Extension in general and the particular Extension of Matter, of this or that Body, as if the latter were something superadded to the former, tho they cou'd not assign the Subject of the former, whether a Substance neither Body nor Spirit, or a new kind of Nothing endow'd with the Propertys of a Being. Nay many of them have not stuck to make it pass for the Supreme Being it self, or at least for an inadequate Conception of God, as may be seen in the ingenious Mr. RALPHSON's Book of Real Space, to whom I had an eye in the two foregoing Paragraphs; tho, as may be likewise learnt from his own Authoritys, he was neither the first Broacher of this Conceit, nor the only Maintainer of it now. I am satisfy'd that most of those Gentlemen did firmly believe the Existence of a Deity, and I charitably hope it of 'em all; but in my Opinion their unwary Zeal refin'd him into mere

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mere Nothing, or (what they wou'd as little allow) they made Nature or the Univerſe to be the only God: but the Goodneſs of their Intention ought to ſecure 'em with all men of Candor from the Charge and Conſequences of Atheiſm. Their Miſtake however was perceiv'd by the Atheiſts themſelves, and made the Subject of their Mirth, as in theſe four Lines of a Poem, wherein, after cavilling before at ſome other Notions of the Deity, they ridicule this infinite incorporeal Space on much better grounds.

Others, whoſe Heads ſublimer Notions trace,
Cunningly prove that thou'rt Almighty Space;
And Space w'are ſure is nothing, ergo Thou:
Theſe Men ſlip into Truth they know not how.

And truly the fancy of one Extenſion penetrating another, made many others laugh, who are as far as any from Atheiſm or Irreligion: and ſome of 'em wou'd fain learn where the Reaſon and Wiſdom of extended Space reſides, whether

whether in the Whole, or in any of the Parts, I ſpeak of Parts in a ſenſe of Accommodation, for Infinite can have none: but if with one of CICERO's Dialogiſts they wou'd infer that the Whole muſt have Underſtanding, becauſe ſome Portions of it are intelligent; beſides not allowing the Underſtanding of the Parts to belong in any manner to their Extenſion, we may retort with the other Speaker in CICERO, that by the ſame Argument, the Whole muſt be a Courtier, a Muſician, a Dancing-maſter, or a Philoſopher, becauſe many of the Parts are ſuch. But theſe are Sophiſms on both ſides, by confounding variable Modes with eſſential Propertys, or by aſcribing true Effects to imaginary, foreign, or diſproportionable Cauſes. Letter V.

27. AFTER accounting for the eſſential Motion of Matter, you'll find that the Compariſons and Similitudes rather than the Arguments of thoſe who defend Space, prove no more than that you conceive what they mean, or elſe that they generally beg the Queſtion. I can ſuppoſe with any of them, that all the Matter of the World is reduc'd by

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taurs, Chimeras, and other Monſters, which never had a Being. But I grant to him that by ſuch Inſtances I perfectly underſtand the meaning of thoſe who contend for Space or a Void, which was abſurd in the Carteſians to deny, and unpardonable to diſpute againſt a thing, whereof they profeſt to have no Idea. Mr. Locke has all that can be ſaid on this Subject in his *Eſſay of Human Underſtanding*, eſpecially in the thirteenth Chapter of the ſecond Book, where among other things he uſes theſe words: *If Body be not ſuppos'd infinite, which, I think, no one will affirm, I can conceive a Man at the extremity of Matter, and that he can ſtretch his Hand beyond his Body.* He cou'd not be ignorant how many affirm'd the Infinity of Matter before he was born, and I am not the only Man that does it in his own time: but tho I can abſtract to my ſelf ſuch imaginary Bounds, yet I cannot meet with one good reaſon to perſuade me that Extenſion (which he acknowledges infinite) does exiſt any where out of Matter: I ſay, that I find nothing offer'd to perſuade me of this, but ſuch Suppoſitions as I have already confuted; Letter V.

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confuted; not to insist on insurmountable Difficultys arising from those fictitious Extremitys, as to their Consistence, Figure, whether any thing can break loose from them, what becomes of such Fractions, and a thousand other Riddles. I can further gratify him in the Consideration of divided Particles; but I deny that the Continuity of infinite Matter can ever be separated by any distinct Surfaces with void intermediate Spaces: for we only abstract (as I told you in the sixth and seventh Paragraphs) what we call Parts, considering by it self so much of Extension as is for our purpose, and distinguishing such Parcels not by real Divisions from the Whole, but by the Modifications of Color, Figure, Motion, or the like, as we consider the Heat without the Light of the Sun. He says further, That *those who assert the Impossibility of Space existing without Matter, must not only make Body infinite, but must also deny a power in God to annihilate any part of Mater.* That they make Matter infinite is confest; but what he adds about Annihilation is deny'd: for besides that no Revelation from God can be produc'd, wherein he has

has declar'd that he will annihilate any part of Matter, ſo it is no Argument for a real Space, that God has it in his power to annihilate, no more than that the World ſhall actually finiſh in three Days, becauſe I conceive it poſſible for God to deſtroy it in that ſhort time. I know no reaſon (of what he aſſerts in the ſame place) why the Maintainers of infinite Matter ſhou'd *be loth to ſpeak out their opinion*, any more than the Maintainers of infinite Space, or of any other Infinite, for the word is apply'd to more Subjects than one or two: and what made CARTESIUS backward to affirm expreſly that Matter was infinite, contenting himſelf with the word Indefinite, was his being ſure on the one hand that Extenſion was infinite; and yet, allowing withal that Matter was naturally inactive and really diviſible, he cou'd not well demonſtrate its Infinity, tho you that read him ſo often need no Proofs that he ſometimes poſitively affirm'd it. As for the Theological Exceptions to this Poſition, they are of little weight, and ſhow the Philoſophy of ſome Men to be as little as their Zeal is great and fervent; nor do I believe that the moderate and

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learned Divines of our time will revive the exploded Sophiſms of their ignorant Predeceſſors. But I deſire you wou'd remember, that notwithſtanding my Diſſent with Mr. LOCK about Space, I conſider his *Eſſay of Human Underſtanding* to be the moſt uſeful Book towards attaining univerſal Knowledg, that is extant in any Language; as well as for helping Men to ſpeak pertinently, intelligibly, and accurately, of all kinds of Subjects: nor have I affected here to oppoſe ſo great a Man; but knowing how much his Authority ſway'd with you from my own Recommendation, I took care to remove the Prejudices you might thence entertain againſt infinite Matter, its eſſential Motion, or whatever might be built on ſuch Foundations.

28. AND now, SIR, after having led me this tedious Chaſe, by the work you took care to cut out for me in your ſhort but moſt comprehenſive Letter, I queſtion not but you'll allow that Motion ought to enter into the Definition of Matter, no leſs than Extenſion or Solidity. But if you demand the Definition of Motion it ſelf, I anſwer that I cannot give it, nor any other Man, tho

tho never ſo able; not that we know it the leſs for all this, but on the contrary becauſe we know it better than any thing which is capable of a Definition. Simple Ideas, ſuch as Motion, Extenſion, Color, Sound, are ſelf-evident, and their Names by no means definable; but the ſingle Words which denote complex Ideas, that is, a Collection of ſelf-evident Ideas conſider'd as one thing, are the true Objects of Definition; becauſe the ſeveral Terms for thoſe Ideas, when put together, ſhow the Connection, Poſſibility, and Conception of the Whole. Thus all the Words in the world cou'd not explain Blue, nor give the clear Idea of it to one who never ſaw that Color; but ſuppoſing the ſame Perſon never ſaw any Gold, tho well acquainted with other Metals, yet he'll be able to form a diſtinct Notion of it, from the mouth of another who deſcribes it of a certain Yellowneſs and Weight, malleable, fuſible, fixt, and the like. When the Names therefore of ſimple Ideas are defin'd, we muſt not imagine it to be their Subjects; for ſynonymous Terms do not explain the nature of the thing, but give us the meaning of the Word in more intelligible

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Terms: wherefore Paſſage, Tranſlation, Removing, ſucceſſive Application, are but other words for Motion, and no Definitions of the thing, no more than ARISTOTLE's *Act of a being in power ſo far forth as it is in power*; but all particular local Motions may be defin'd by the Lines they deſcribe, and the Cauſes that determine the Courſe or Degrees of their Motion. The ſame is to be underſtood of the general Extenſion of Matter, and of its particular Determinations, by Meaſure, Figures, or any other way. The Solidity of all Matter is likewiſe an intuitive or undefinable Idea. But I do not here underſtand Solidity in the ſenſe of Geometers, of every aſſign'd Quantity that has three Dimenſions; but as Mr. LOCK has ſubſtituted this poſitive Term, inſtead of the negative one of Impenetrability, for the Reſiſtance we find in every Body to the Entrance of any other Body into the place it poſſeſſes till it has left it: as a drop of Water equally preſt on all ſides, is an inſurmountable Obſtacle for the ſtrongeſt Bodys in the Univerſe to join, till it be remov'd; and ſo a piece of Wood will keep your two Hands from ever coming together, tho you endea-

vour it never ſo forcibly. The ſame is as true of all fluid and ſoft things, as of the moſt fixt or hard, or heavy or light; as true of Air and Pulp, as of Gold and Diamonds; which, as the moſt exact Mr. Locke again obſerves to you, diſtinguiſhes the word as put for an inſeparable Property of Matter, from the common Acceptation of it, when ſolid is put for hard, in which ſenſe it is a certain Coheſion of the Parts of any thing difficultly ſeparated, whereas in the Philoſophical ſenſe it is a Repletion, or utter Excluſion of all other Bodys, and ſo I have underſtood it throughout this whole Letter, except in the third Paragraph. Letter V.

29. I WON'T ſay that Matter has no other eſſential Propertys but theſe three of Extenſion, Solidity, and Action: but I am perſuaded that from the due and joint Conſideration of theſe alone, a world of its Phænomena may be better accounted for than hitherto. But few Diſcoverys are to be expected in natural Philoſophy from one who abſtracts any of them from the reſt, or that makes it alone the compleat Eſſence of Matter: for 'tis moſt certain that in

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Matter thoſe Attributes are never otherwiſe but mentally divided from one another. That Extenſion, for example, exhauſts the Idea of Matter, I deny; ſince it does not imply Solidity or Motion: but that all extended is Matter, may be very true, tho Matter be not barely extended, but likewiſe active and ſolid. But tho in the pure Conſideration of thoſe Ideas the one does not ſuppoſe the other, and that each of 'em has certain Modes which are conceiv'd to belong immediately to it ſelf, yet they are ſo firmly linkt in Nature, that the one cannot exiſt without the other, and they all neceſſarily concur to the producing of thoſe Modes which are proper to each. Extenſion is the immediate Subject of all the Diviſions, Figures, and Parcels of Matter; but 'tis Action that cauſes thoſe Alterations, and they cou'd not be diſtinct without Solidity. Action is the immediate Cauſe of all local Motions, Changes, or Varietys in Matter; but Extenſion is the Subject and Meaſure of their Diſtances: and tho upon Solidity depends the Reſiſtance, Impulſe, and Protruſion of Bodys, yet 'tis Action that produces them in Extenſion. Solidity, Extenſion, and Action, are therefore three

three diſtinct Ideas, but not three different things; only the various Conſiderations of one and the ſelf-ſame Matter. To return to our particular Subject, you may eaſily perceive by this time, that the *Vis motrix*, the true motive Force is this eſſential Action of Matter; and that the *Vis impreſſa*, the impreſt Force of particular Bodys, is ſome Determination of the general Action: for in this ſenſe it's indiſputable that nothing can move, that is, determine it ſelf, till it be determin'd by ſome other thing: ſo that Matter being active, the Direction given to that Action in any part, wou'd of it ſelf for ever continue, becauſe no Effect can be without a Cauſe, and by conſequence this Direction muſt be chang'd by ſome greater Force, as that by another, and ſo on, one never ending but for another to begin, no more than any Figure is deſtroy'd in Matter, but to make place for another. Thus one Motion is always ſucceeded by another Motion, and never by abſolute Reſt, no more than in any Parcel of Matter the ceaſing of one Figure is the ceaſing of all, which is impoſſible. Theſe Determinations of Motion in the Parts of ſolid extended Matter, are what we call the Phæno-

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mena of Nature, and to which we give Names or aſcribe Uſes, Perfection or Imperfection, according as they affect our Senſes, and cauſe Pain or Pleaſure to our Bodys, contribute to our Preſervation or Deſtruction: but we do not always denominate 'em from their real Cauſes, or ways of producing one another, as the Elaſticity, Hardneſs, Softneſs, Fluidity, Quantity, Figures, and Relations of particular Bodys. On the contrary we frequently attribute many Determinations of Motion to no Cauſe at all, as the ſpontaneous Motion of Animals: for, however thoſe Motions may be accompany'd by Thought, yet, conſider'd as Motions, they have their phyſical Cauſes, as a Dog's running after a Hare, the Bulk of the external Object acting by its whole Force of Impulſe or Attraction on the Nerves, which are ſo diſpos'd with the Muſcles, Joints, and other Parts, as to produce various Motions in the Animal Machine. And whoever underſtands in any meaſure the Action of Bodys on one another by their immediate Contact, or by the imperceptible Particles that continually flow from them, and to this Knowledg joins that of Mechanics, Hydroſtatics, and Anatomy,

Anatomy, will be convinc'd that all the Motions of ſitting, ſtanding, lying, riſing, running, walking, and ſuch others, have their proper, external, material, and proportionable Determinations. After Mr. NEWTON, in the Preface of his *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philoſophy*, has ſpoken of Gravity, Elaſticity, Reſiſtance, Impulſe, and Attraction, and of his Explication of the mundane Syſtem by theſe Principles; * *I wiſh*, adds he, *that we cou'd by the ſame Method of reaſoning be able to explain the other Phænomena of Nature from mechanic Principles! for I am induc'd by divers Conſiderations to ſuſpect a little, that all theſe may depend on certain Forces, whereby from Cauſes yet undiſcover'd the Particles of Bodys are mutually impell'd againſt each other, and cohere according to regular Figures, or whereby they recede and are driven from one another: which*

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* Utinam cætera Naturæ Phænomena ex Principiis mechanicis eodem argumentandi genere derivare liceret! Nam multa me movent, ut nonnihil ſuſpicer ea omnia ex viribus quibuſdam pendere poſſe, quibus Corporum particulæ per cauſas nondum cognitas vel in ſe mutuo impelluntur & ſecundum Figuras regulares coherent, vel ab invicem fugantur & recedunt: quibus viribus ignotis, Philoſophi hactenus Naturam fruſtra tentarunt.

Forces

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Forces being yet unknown, the Philoſophers have hitherto attempted Nature in vain. What thoſe particular Forces and Figures may be, with their Reaſons and Degrees, none in the world is ſo well able to diſcover and reduce into an intelligible Syſtem, as the moſt excellent Author: but as for the general or moving Force of all Matter, I wou'd flatter my ſelf, that I have done ſomething towards it in this Letter.

30. THUS I have return'd a particular Anſwer, I think, to every Demand in yours, except to your laſt Objection, which (were there degrees in Truth and Falſhood) is more feeble than all the reſt, That *after admitting the Activity of Matter, there ſeems to be no need of a preſiding Intelligence:* which, give me leave to ſay it, is the moſt thoughtleſs and unweigh'd Expreſſion I ever knew to drop from your Mouth or Pen; ſince you do not allow your ſelf to draw invidious Conſequences contrary to the Perſuaſion of your own Conſcience, as but too too many are known to do. Beſides, that God was able to create this Matter active as well as extended, that he cou'd give it the one

one Property as well as the other, and that no reaſon can be aſſign'd why he ſhou'd not endue it with the former as well as with the latter; is there likewiſe no neceſſity that he ſhou'd ever or rather always direct its Motions? Can the Formation of Animals or Plants be accounted for from the Action, any more than from the Extenſion of Matter? Or are you able to imagine that the Action and Reaction of Bodys, of all the Particles of Matter on one another, cou'd ever have the Contrivance to make any one of thoſe admirable vegetable or animal Machines? All your Skill in Mechaniſm can no more help you, than it did CARTESIUS, to find out Rules and Engines for making either a Man or a Mouſe. All the jumbling of Atoms, all the Chances you can ſuppoſe for it, cou'd no more bring the Parts of the Univerſe into their preſent Order, nor continue them in the ſame, nor cauſe the Organization of a Flower or a Fly, than you can imagine that by tumbling together the Letters of a Printer a million of times, they ſhou'd ever fall at laſt into ſuch a Poſition, as to make the *Æneis* of VIRGIL, or the *Ilias* of HOMER, Letter V.

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HOMER, or any other Book in the world. And as for the Infinity of Matter, it only excludes, what all reaſonable and good Men muſt exclude, an extended corporeal God, but not a pure Spirit or immaterial Being. I am perſuaded, that in omitting many other common Objections, you purpoſely ſpar'd me, knowing there was no end of Abſurditys from falſe or precarious Syſtems; Abſurditys ſo monſtrous, that they have driven ſeveral of the Carteſians (to name no others) to as monſtrous Hypotheſes, when not knowing wherein conſiſted the moving Force, and for avoiding the Tranſition of Accidents from one Subject to another, they are not aſham'd to ſay, that God takes the Motion from one Bowl that is running forward (for example) and communicates it to the other againſt which it rubs, continuing it during its Courſe by his immediate Concurrence, and taking it away by ſuch degrees as are obſerv'd in the ordinary Laws of Motion. Is this to explain any thing? Or are theſe the men that laugh at Sympathy, Antipathy, occult Qualitys, or the like? I know to whom I addreſs my ſelf, when I ſpeak of every thing

thing ſo ſuccinctly; any the leaſt Hint being enough for you, to work out all the reſt by your own moſt happy Genius: beſides that the ordinary Solutions can never ſatisfy any man who denies the ordinary Suppoſitions. Letter V.

31. PRAY, againſt your writing to me next, be pleas'd to conſider whether the Mathematicians (who are generally the beſt and ſtricteſt Reaſoners, tho they build ſometimes on groundleſs Suppoſitions, and have often made real Beings of abſtracted Ideas) whether, I ſay, they did not perceive, without reflecting that they did ſo, the Neceſſity of this intrinſick and eſſential Action of Matter, by their *Conatus ad Motum?* I have purpoſely omitted inſiſting on this, when I ſhow'd you that it was the Diſcovery of the ſame perpetual and univerſal Action, that gave a Being to the Syſtems of the Stoics, Plaſtics, Hylozoics, and others: for my Intention has not bin to write all I cou'd ſay on this Subject, but as much as I thought neceſſary to anſwer your Objections, and to bring you over to the ſame Opinion. Neither will I point out to you what further uſe in Philoſophy

Letter V. Philoſophy may be made of this eſſential Motion of Matter, beſides a clearer Knowledg of Nature in general, and the particular Deciſion of the Controverſys about the moving Force, about local Motion without or with a Void, about the nature of Space, and the Infinity of Matter. I am confident that before your reading thus far, you have already made the Application of this Doctrin to ſeveral other Difficultys, having impartially revolv'd in your own Mind the unſatisfactory Gueſſes and miſerable Circles, rather than genuine Explications of the Schools; and that you have conſider'd likewiſe what numberleſs Errors may branch themſelves over the whole Body of Philoſophy, from any one falſe Principle laid down for undiſputed Truth, without Proof or Examination. What Obſervations of this kind I have made my ſelf from time to time, I ſhall freely impart to you and our common Friend, who alone philoſophizes at Court, and who exceeds all the reſt in Politeneſs and Addreſs, as much as he does in Wiſdom and Literature, his ſuperior Genius and admirable Senſe no leſs diſtinguiſhing him in ordinary

ordinary Ceremonys, than in the niceſt and moſt arduous Points of State Affairs. But I ſhall give you no further trouble, SIR, till you are next diſpos'd to honor me with your Commands. Letter V.

FINIS.